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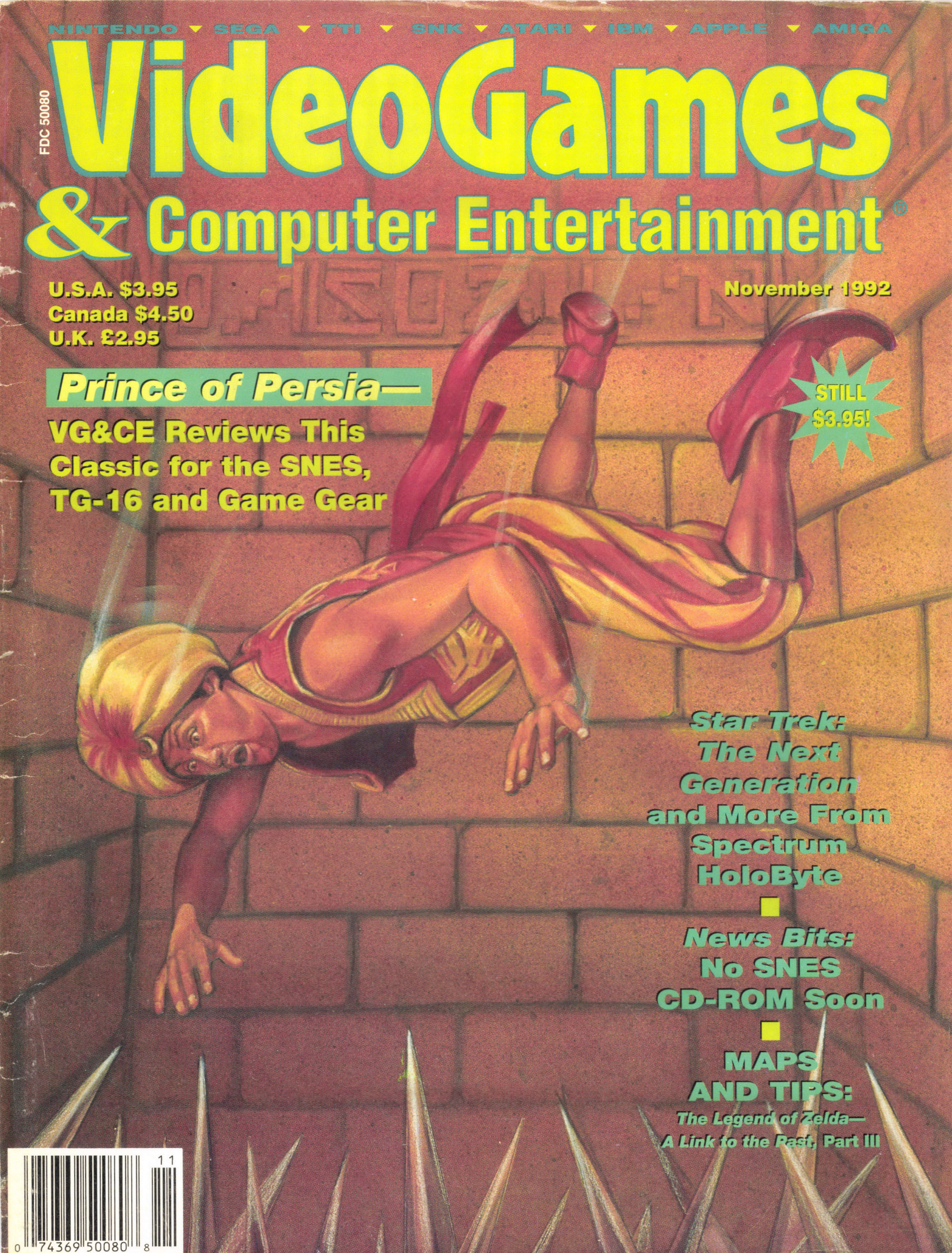
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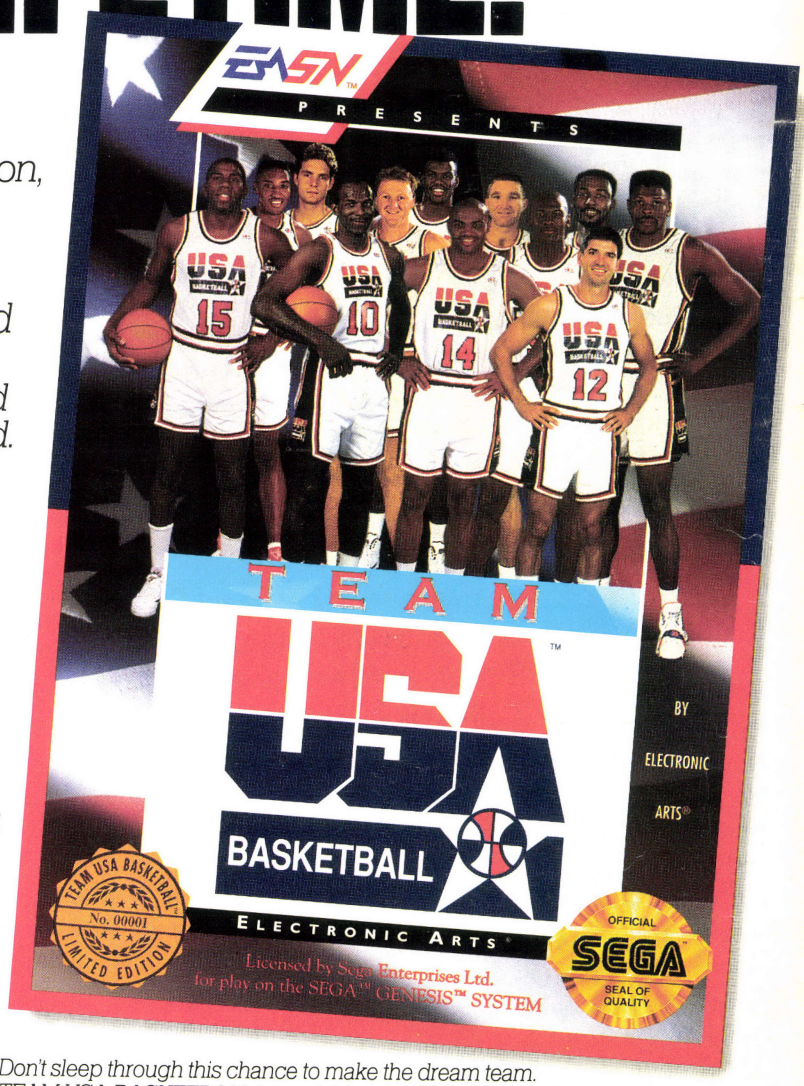
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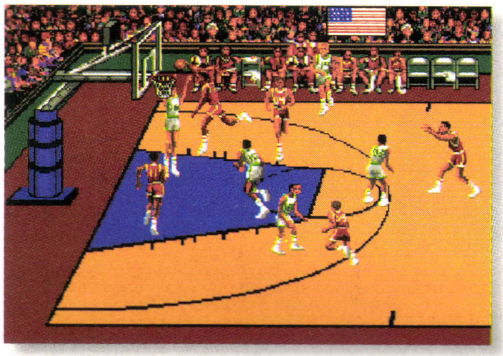
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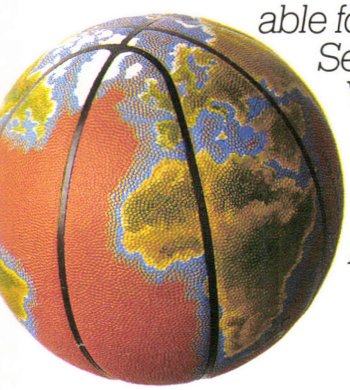
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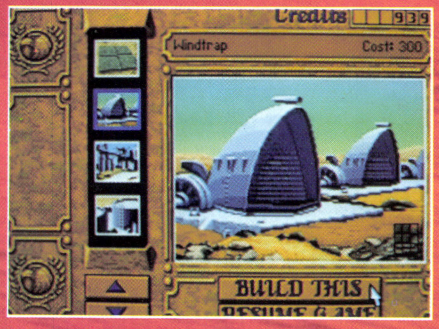
The Building of A Dynasty



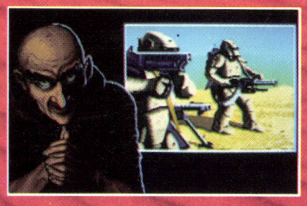
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CIRCLE #102 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Cover: *Prince of Persia*, the original Brøderbund and Jordan Mechner classic, will be released on just about every video-game system available. Join us this month as we review the Super NES, TG-CD and Game Gear versions.

Cover Art: Marcus Huebner

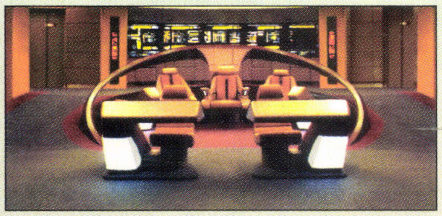
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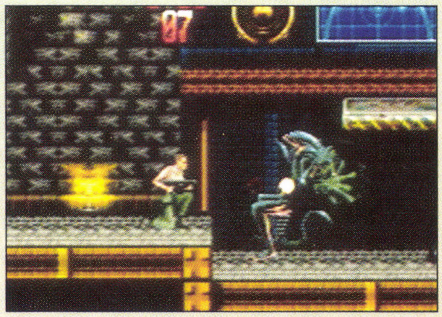
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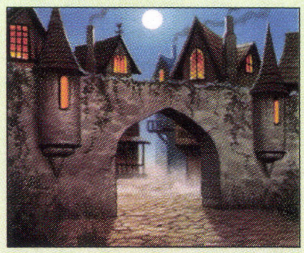
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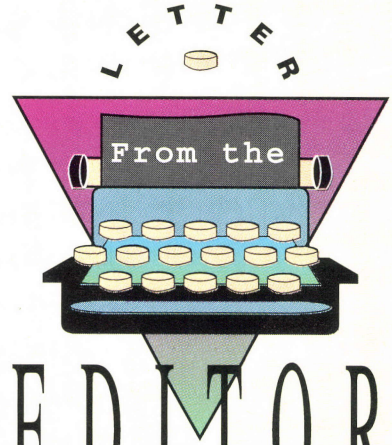
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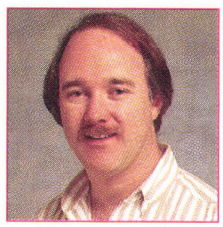
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As we come to the end of the year, it's a good time to look ahead to what will be happening in 1993. By perusing various parts of this issue, you'll get some hints at what's to come.

One of the strangest and most significant, as described in the *News Bits* section, is that Nintendo will miss its original January 1993 release date for an SNES CD-ROM unit. However, the claim from the "Big N" that it is bypassing 16-bit CD to go directly to 32-bit is a tenuous argument. It's my opinion that Nintendo wouldn't have hit the January date even if it had stuck with 16-bit CD, because we'd gotten no prior word of active CD development from our many industry sources. As well, there were no announcements of upcoming titles at previous CESes, which usually precede major products like a CD-ROM player.



Even stranger is the vague statement made by Nintendo's president, Hiroshi Yamauchi, who said that "development of the 32-bit CD-ROM accessory will be completed in 1993 with mass production *possible* [my emphasis] by August 1993." These comments were made at the Shoshinkai Software Show in Tokyo in late August. Games take a long time to develop these days, thanks to more advanced consoles. Sound is no longer a series of clicks and beeps, but may be as involved production-wise as some chart-topping records. Graphics are much more lavish, using large palettes of colors, instead of the crude images of the "old days." It's hard to believe that, if Nintendo just decided to change its CD platform, it would be ready for mass production of the hardware, have development stations in game producers' hands *and* expect software ready to be released in one year's time. From the standpoint of a game-development team, a year is a very short measure.

Of course, I could be wrong, but the clues are there—and it's not hard to believe, given that the game industry is mired in hype and innuendo. For instance, there is currently a lot of dissension against the Software Publishers Association (SPA), an organization that should be *helping* game developers. We've been inundated with weird *Street Fighter II* codes that we haven't been able to prove workable. Many products are announced, then end up late or never released at all.

Our job is to wade through it all to give you the whole story—and do it accurately. It may be tough, but we'll be here, trust me. We also have some exciting things, like last month's hologram cover, to spring on you. Stick around, because, Nintendo CD-ROM or not, it'll be an exciting 1993. I guarantee it.

—Andy Eddy, Executive Editor

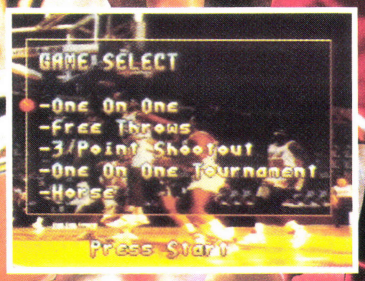
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–Bill Kunkel, renowned video game editor and reviewer.
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–Robert Gennett, Semi Finalist, Nintendo World Championship,
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"83% of game players tested preferred the Turbo Touch 360 to the existing controller. This is a very impressive "win" for a product in video game marketing research."

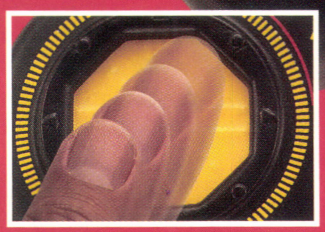
–Karl Weigl, Baker Restaino Schumann Research,
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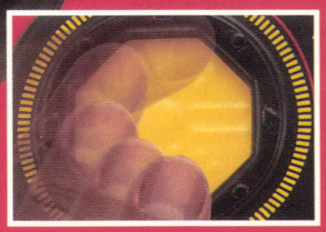
Technology Break-through in Video Game Control



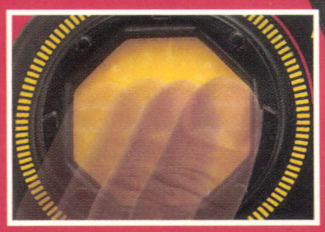
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CIRCLE #104 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



GAME DAZE

The state of modern gaming has left me in a daze. I swear, if I play another horizontally scrolling, defeat-the-boss-and-save-the-princess/world/universe game, I'll happily commit myself to the nearest looney bin.

One would naturally assume that with the onslaught of new technology in the video-game field, programmers would be able to be much more creative. However, just the opposite is true. With today's batch of games, I find myself longing for games of years past. Where are today's *Zaxxons*, *Jousts* and *Q*Berts*? Nowhere to be seen, sadly.

What I want to know is why video-game companies refuse to try anything new. Is it a money matter? I think so. Companies probably don't want to risk big bucks putting out an innovative game that might bomb. Such a shame, but there is hope. Well, at least I hope so. Maybe, just maybe, when Atari launches its new system, it'll consider updating its old hits. Imagine a 64-bit *Donkey Kong*, *Asteroids* or *Missile Command*. It gives me the chills just thinking about it.

So what does someone like myself do while hoping for a return of the classics? I cry. I cry because I got rid of my Atari 2600 when I received my NES. That was a sad day indeed.

—Jeff Wilson
Brooklyn, New York

As we've said previously, just enjoy what you have—but you should also make sure the video-game companies know how you feel. We too miss the "classics," the games that tried out new things. Today, indeed, seems to be filled with endless "me, too" games. We'd die for Gravitar, Tempest *and some of Atari's oldies but goodies brought to the 16-bit market. I don't think we have the patience to wait for the day when Atari—or any other manufacturer, for that matter—brings out a 64-bit system.*

If anything encouraging can be said, it's that we recently spoke to Activision. Its new management has indicated that it may bring back some of its vintage titles to the current slate of game systems. Can you imagine River Raid 1992*? How about updates of* Pitfall, Kaboom *or* Freeway*?*

STATIC ON HIS PORTABLE

I think your mag is great. I am the proud owner of a Sega Game Gear. I was wondering if there is an adapter or a link that could put my game on a TV screen, but still control it from the Game Gear itself. If there is, where can I get it, and for roughly how much?

I was also wondering what Sega plans on doing with the "accessory screwhole" on the back of the unit. Thanks!

—Chris Andersen
Palatine, Illinois

We have a device that allows us to display the Game Gear output (through a Genesis) on a monitor, however it was provided to VG&CE *by Sega in order for us to print pictures of the Game Gear screens in our* Gaming on the Go *column. To our understanding, plans were scrapped by a company not related to Sega due to the cost and engineering required. It would have simply had too high a price tag for mass marketing. Besides, most people would say you're defeating the purpose by using a portable game system in your living room.*

Regarding the accessory screwhole, currently the only device to use that is the Master Gear Converter (MGC), which allows you to play Master System games on the Game Gear. The anchor screw prevents the MGC from coming out when you remove a cartridge. We aren't aware of any other uses for the accessory screwhole, except maybe attaching the GG to a wall or dashboard—but we've never seen anyone do it.

IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS STREET FIGHTER...

I know that Capcom is also making games for the Genesis. The game that most interested me was *Street Fighter II* from the coin-op. I know that Capcom has made this game for the SNES, but, unfortunately, I don't have the system. I would just like to know whether Capcom will make *Street Fighter II* for the Genesis.

—Sothy Pheng
Lowell, Massachusetts

Currently, the SNES and arcades are the only places to play Street

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CORRECTIONS

• In the "Racing Down the Electronic Road Rally" article (August 1992), there were a few mislabeled games. *Super Off-Road* will appear on the Game Boy via Tradewest; adding to the list will be a Lynx version by Telegames. Also, *R.C. Grand Prix* (from Absolute Entertainment) is Game Gear-bound, not Genesis.

• In the September issue, there was a mistake and a miss in the *Nick Arcade* feature. We missed giving credit to David Nations for taking the on-the-set, behind-the-scenes photographs. We also flopped (a technical publishing term) one of the pictures on page 88. A lot of trust in your teammate betting 01 points....

• And we have egg on our face for giving bad credit. No, our MasterCard is paid up, but we said that Midway published *Street Fighter II: Champion Edition*, instead of Capcom, in the September *News Bits*.

Fighter II. *When asked, a Sega rep was quite vague as to whether a Genesis* SFII *would be available (soon or otherwise); he referred me to the upcoming* Streets of Rage 2 *by Sega. Like the SNES* SFII, SOR2 *will be a 16-meg cart. Given the previous Capcom titles that have been licensed to the Genesis (such as* Strider *and* Ghouls 'n Ghosts*), we may one day see a Genesis* SFII.

What we have learned, however, is that Hudson Soft is readying a PC Engine version (though you can expect a TurboGrafx-16/TurboDuo version will follow) of Street Fighter II *under the name* Fighting Street II. *Though we don't have many other details, look for a giant TurboChip card with a tentative release date of spring 1993. The large-sized card—reportedly bigger than the SNES version, which came in at 16 megabits—will be truer to the arcade game. Animation and sound effects, like the elephants moving their trunks and making noise in the background of the Dhalsim fight scene, will again be part of the game.*

MISSING DISNEY

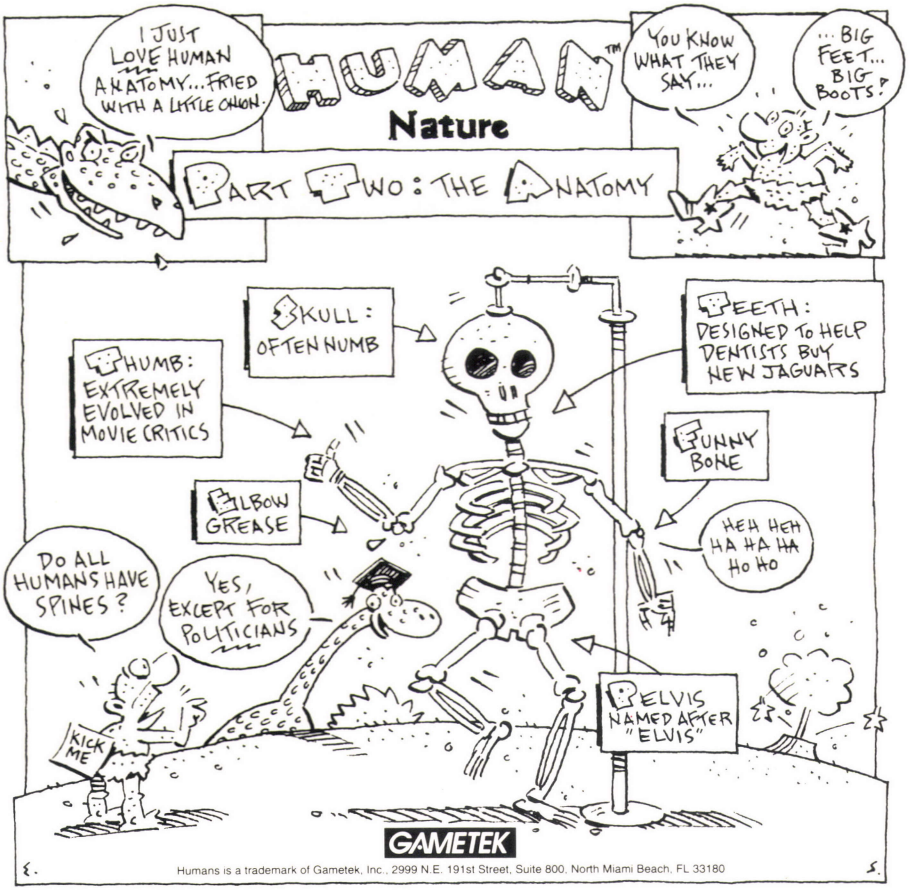
I have thoroughly loved all your reviews of my favorite Disney video games. Can you tell me why you omitted my favorite, *Talespin* for the NES by Capcom? As far as I know, it was never reviewed. Thanks.

—Raquelle Herbst
New York, New York

No, VG&CE *never reviewed* Talespin. *Each month, we get a slew of cartridges, but it's impossible to cover all these games, so we take a cross section of cart and computer games for review. Certain criteria affect our decision, such as games' release dates and making sure we cover all game systems. The review section is very popular, and we've increased its size, but, unfortunately, there are limitations. Thanks for writing.*

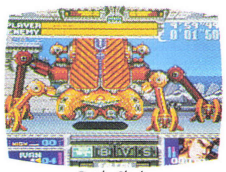
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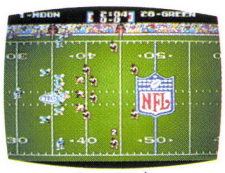
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American Heart Association

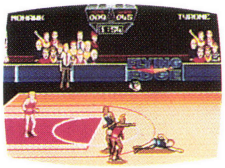


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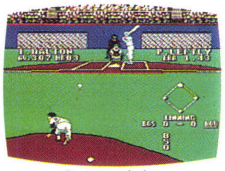
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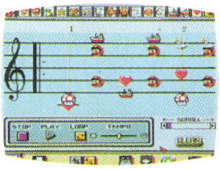

Battle Clash


Super Bowl


Arch Rivals


Return of Zelda

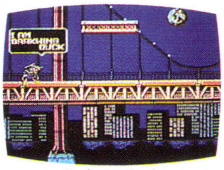

Bases Loaded 3


Mario Paint


Kablooey


Bart vs. The Space Mutants

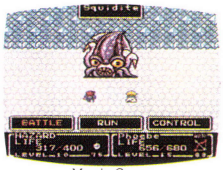

Contra III

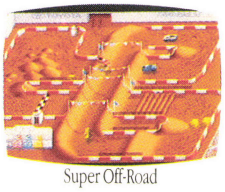

Darkwing Duck


Desert Strike


Castlevania IV


Waialae Country Club

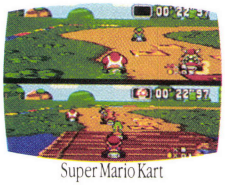

Mystic Quest

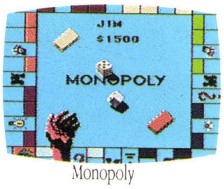

Super Off-Road

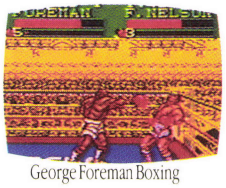
Suddenly, the place with the games everyone wants is Sears.

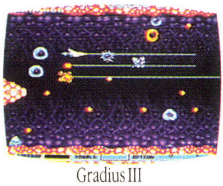
Go figure.

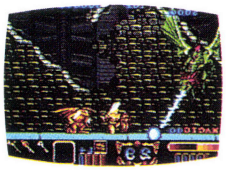

YOSHI

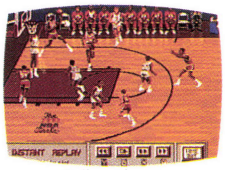

Super Mario Kart


Monopoly


George Foreman Boxing

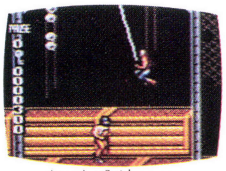

Gradius III


Magic Sword

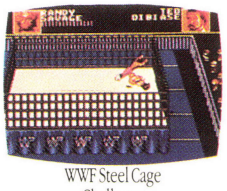

Bulls vs. Blazers

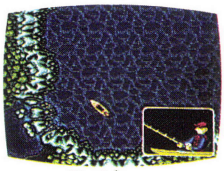

Steel Empire


Super Double Dragon

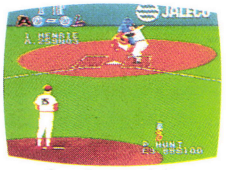

Amazing Spiderman


Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III

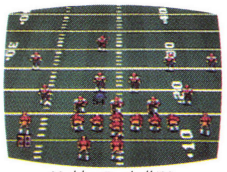

WWF Steel Cage Challenge


King Salmon


NHL Hockey '93


Super Bases Loaded


Act Raiser

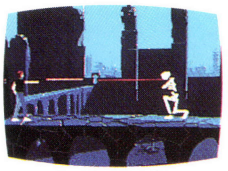

Madden Football '93


T2 The Arcade Game

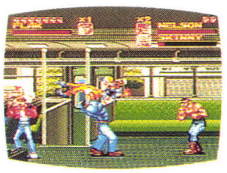

Super Monaco GP II


Batman Returns


Hook


Out Of This World


Battletoads

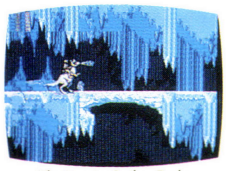

Rival Turf


Darius Twin

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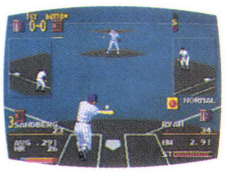
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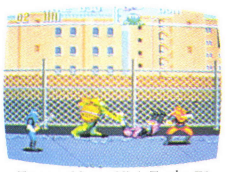

The Empire Strikes Back


Taz-Mania


Paperboy 2


Sports Talk Baseball


Street Fighter II

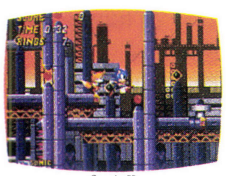

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles IV


Top Gear


Evander Holyfield Boxing


Mystical Ninja

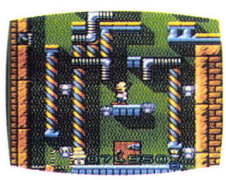

Road Rash II


Sonic II
(Coming November 24th)


Tiny Toons


Jack Nicklaus Golf


Gargoyle's Quest II


Krusty's Fun House


Ferrari Grand Prix



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Even the best player has trouble with a game now and again, but where can you turn for help? VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT has designed ***Tip Sheet*** to give you, the reader, answers to questions such as, "How do I defeat the end boss on this level?" or, "I've looked everywhere, but I can't find the blue vase." So if you're having a problem with a game, write to us, and our group of experts will do everything they can to solve it. Send your letters to:

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Attn: ***Tip Sheet***

TIP SHEET

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BY

CHRIS BIENIEK

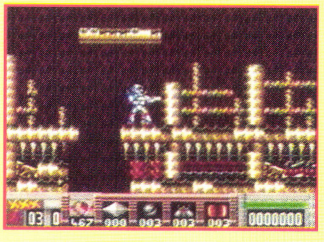
I'm having a tough time with Ballistic's *Turrican* for the TurboGrafx-16. How do I get out of Level 3-3?

—Adam Simpson
Haysville, Kansas

Hoo-boy, this isn't going to be easy to explain without a complete map of the area. There are so many dead ends and false leads in Level 3-3 that it's nearly impossible to clear it before the timer expires, so try to make it there with a few lives left.

At the start of the level, take the ramps to the upper-left corner of the "room"—you'll know you've reached



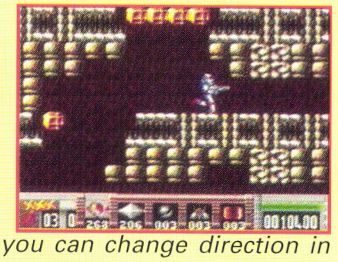


the edge of the playing field when you run up a ramp and the screen stops scrolling to follow you. At this point, there should be an odd-looking ceiling above you that appears to be constructed of logs and fence posts. Jump up through the gap in the ceiling and run across the "logs" all the way to the right.

As you run along the "fence," you'll see platforms above you. If you have enough time, you can hop up and climb these platforms to find dozens of the orange-colored gems that are scattered throughout Level 3. None of this is necessary, though. Just take the last set of platforms and proceed upward.

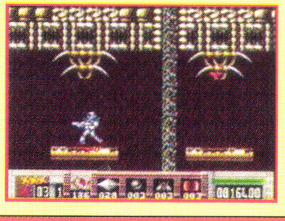
You'll have to take a few tricky jumps here. Many of them involve standing on small platforms that are chipped into the corners of certain

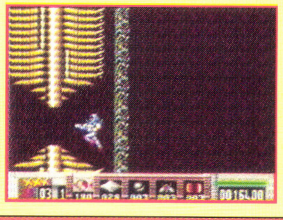


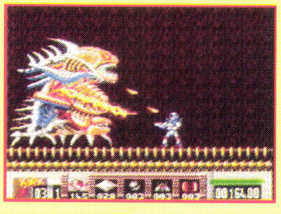


rocks. Just have patience and remember that you can change direction in midair during a jump. Continue to move upward and to the left, and then proceed to the right as you discover different pathways.

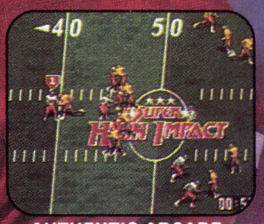
Eventually, you'll reach a room of waterfalls and dangerous yellow dragonflies. Climb the platforms to the right, and then cross over near the ceiling and fall off the last platform. Keep pointing the control pad to the left and you'll pass through a hole in the wall, where you'll battle the Queen Mother and proceed on to the fourth and final level.



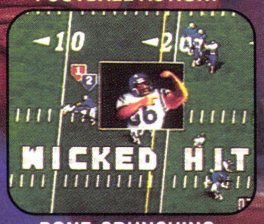




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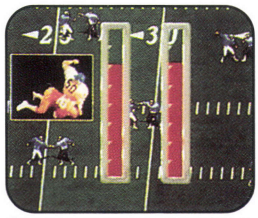
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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

I have owned SNK's *Blue's Journey* for my Neo•Geo for a few weeks, and I'm stumped! I realize that the unlimited continues make this a pretty simple game, but my brother and I just can't figure out a way to beat the Daruma priest at the end of Area 2-B. Can you offer any advice?

—Bobby Velasco
Michigan City, Indiana









Though he appears fairly early in the game, the boss of the Swamp Empire is one of the toughest characters in Blue's Journey. *Your first priority is to concentrate on the dangers on the ground, since the boss is not as immediately dangerous as the fireballs and Daruma dolls he throws at you.*

Use the leaf "dump" to flip over as many of the dolls as possible—pound on that A button constantly! Not only do you need to use the dolls as weapons, but you also must keep the area free of obstacles as you jump over the flames to throw dolls at the boss.

Once you have a clear shot, jump up and let him have it. Try to press the A button twice *whenever you throw, which will clear the way for you by sending a leaf to the ground before you land. You'll have to hit this boss seven times before you can taste the thrill of victory.*



I know I am probably wasting my time by writing this letter, but what the heck. I buy VG&CE on a regular basis and I have a question about the *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* tips in your August issue. The article mentioned that you need the M-79 grenade launcher to take out the T-1000 at the end of the game. At what level can I pick up the grenade launcher, and where does it appear on the screen?

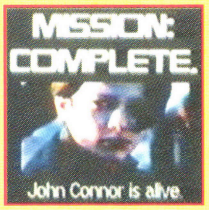
—Andrew Whittaker
Simi Valley, California





Please don't feel that you're wasting your time by writing to Tip Sheet *for help, Andrew. While it's true that we can't possibly provide a detailed response to all of our readers' questions, rest assured that every piece of mail that arrives at our offices is opened and read by one of our staffers. Incidentally, you'll stand a much better chance of having your letter appear in* Tip Sheet *if you ask a specific question about only one game, and be sure to tell us the name of the game and the system you're playing it on. In the case of RPGs or adventure games, you can also increase your chances of a response by providing us with a password that will allow us to jump directly to the part you're stuck on.*

Fortunately, your T2 *question is an easy one. The M-79 grenade launcher drops down from the top of the screen during the final battle; all you need to do is shoot the flashing M-79 icon as it falls and you'll be equipped with this all-important weapon. It generally appears on the right side of the screen, usually during the heat of the battle as the T-1000 is being pushed back to the railing by your shotgun blasts.*





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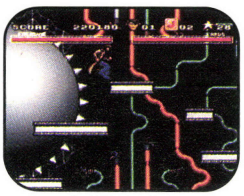
YOU'RE IN FOR A SHOCKER, WEB-SLINGER



END CARNAGE'S "RAIN" OF TERROR



STOP JUGGERNAUT'S RAMPAGE



OUTRUN THE RELENTLESS DOOMBALL

BLAST MASTER MOLD WITH OPTIC BEAMS

ALSO ON GAME GEAR™!



DREAM TEAM!



COME MUTANTS! COME WEB-HEAD!
LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Nintendo's Yamauchi Announces New Technology

Hiroshi Yamauchi, president of Nintendo Co., Ltd., has announced Nintendo's two upcoming hardware projects: the Super FX custom chip and a 32-bit-based CD-ROM player.

The Super FX chip will allow SNES cartridges to display texture mapping, shading and real 3-D perspective. Nintendo's first game using the Super FX chip will be released in February 1993, and licensees will have access to the chip about the same time.

Citing the limited graphic enhancements a 16-bit processor-based CD-ROM product would allow, Yamauchi announced that Nintendo will instead build a CD-ROM accessory with a built-in 32-bit processor. The CD-ROM will be released no sooner than August 1993.

Accolade Gets Sega Injunction Overturned

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has dissolved the injunction that had prevented Accolade from developing, manufacturing or selling games for the Sega Genesis. In its lawsuit, Sega had alleged that Accolade had been studying the Genesis and several game cartridges to learn how the Genesis works. Sega alleged that this process, called reverse engineering, infringed on existing Sega trademarks and copyrights. Sega, however, could not prove that Accolade's games were "substantially similar" to existing Genesis games, a necessary element in proving infringement.

Video-Game Manufacturers Urge Congress to Pass Anticounterfeiting Bill

James Charne, vice-president of Absolute Entertainment, testified before Congress urging stronger penalties for video-game counterfeiting. Citing a May 1991 issue of *Asian Sources Electronics* in which Taiwanese companies admitted to being able to produce over 1 million unauthorized Nintendo cartridges per month, Charne told the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Intellectual Property that the video-game industry loses an estimated $1 billion each year to counterfeits.

The House is currently considering S.893, a bill that would stiffen penalties for distribution or reproduction of over 50 pieces of software. If the bill passes, counterfeiters could face up to $250,000 in fines and five years imprisonment.

Charne spoke on behalf of Nintendo of America and more than 50 video-game developers and publishers.

CompuServe Adds Color Games

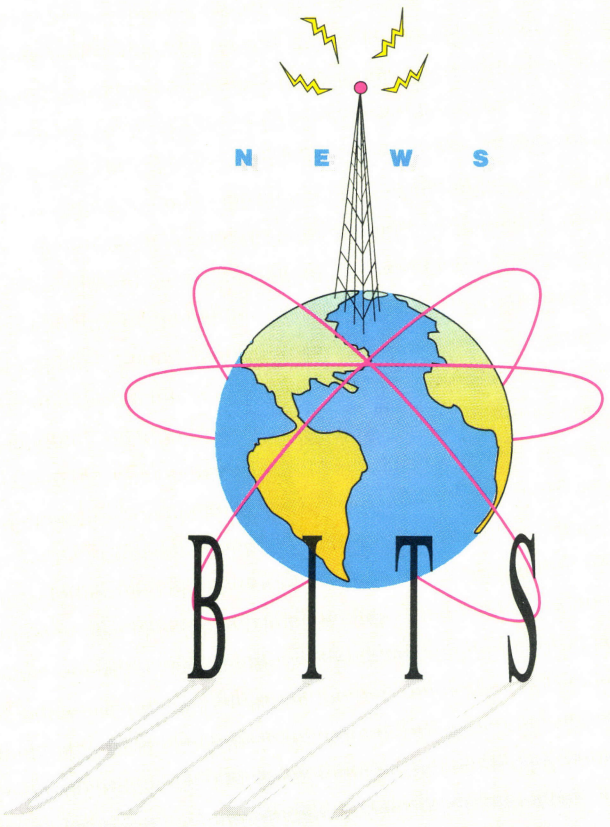
CompuServe has added the color graphic games *Backgammon* and *StarSprint*, a multiplayer space combat simulation, to its Entertainment Center services. Interested members need an IBM PC compatible computer with EGA or better graphics to play the games.

For more information or to join CompuServe, call (800) 524-3388.

TTI Revises Super System Card Configuration

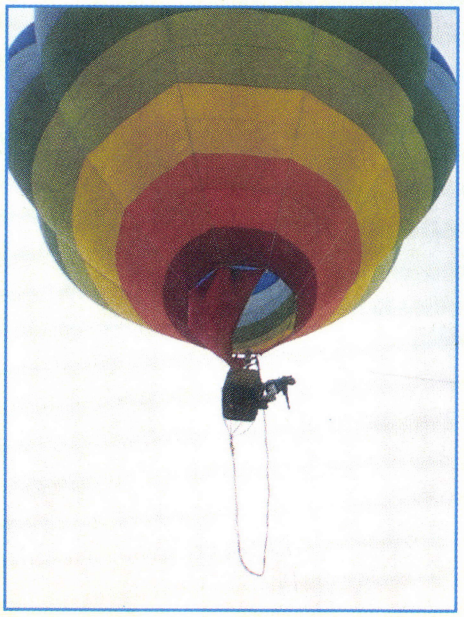
TTI has revised the planned configuration for the Super System Card, which will allow TurboGrafx-16 CD owners to use games developed for the TurboDuo. Available in early 1993, the Super System Card alone will cost $65, while a package including the Super System Card, a Super CD containing *Gate of Thunder*, *Bonk's Adventure* and *Bonk's Revenge* and a $50 coupon book will be available for $95.

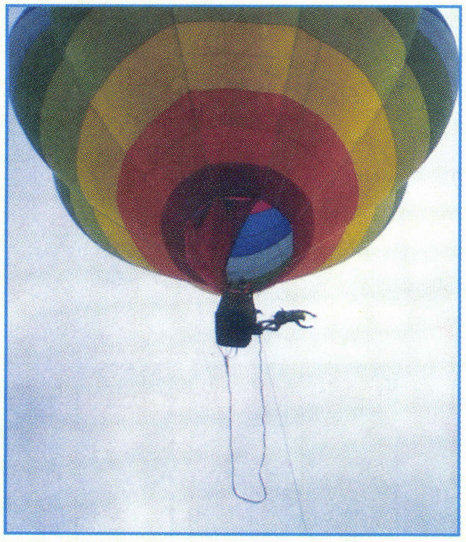
COMPILED BY DAVID S. MOSKOWITZ



Hudson Soft Hurls VG&CE Editors to Near Death at Sales Conference

ASPEN, Colo.—At dawn on August 16, VG&CE Associate Editor Mike Davila was lured into a hot air balloon hoping to see the recently disclosed HuC62 system. When





Hudson Soft, the balloon's charterer, discovered that its guest was in fact Davila, and not *Northern Exposure* star Adam Arkin, they bound his upper torso with bungee cords and hurled him to the ground 150 feet below.

Once the safety lines proved more viable than reports of the *Bonk* RPG spread by Hudson Soft's other guests, VG&CE Ex-

ecutive Editor Andy Eddy entered the balloon to discuss plans for a cover featuring the new Master Higgins Diet Shakes. When informed that Hudson planned no Pocari Sweat flavor, Eddy canceled the Master Higgins cover and was similarly bound and thrown to the ground. Like his second in command, Eddy received no damage to his health meter.



TTI Offers Consumers TurboDuo Display Unit

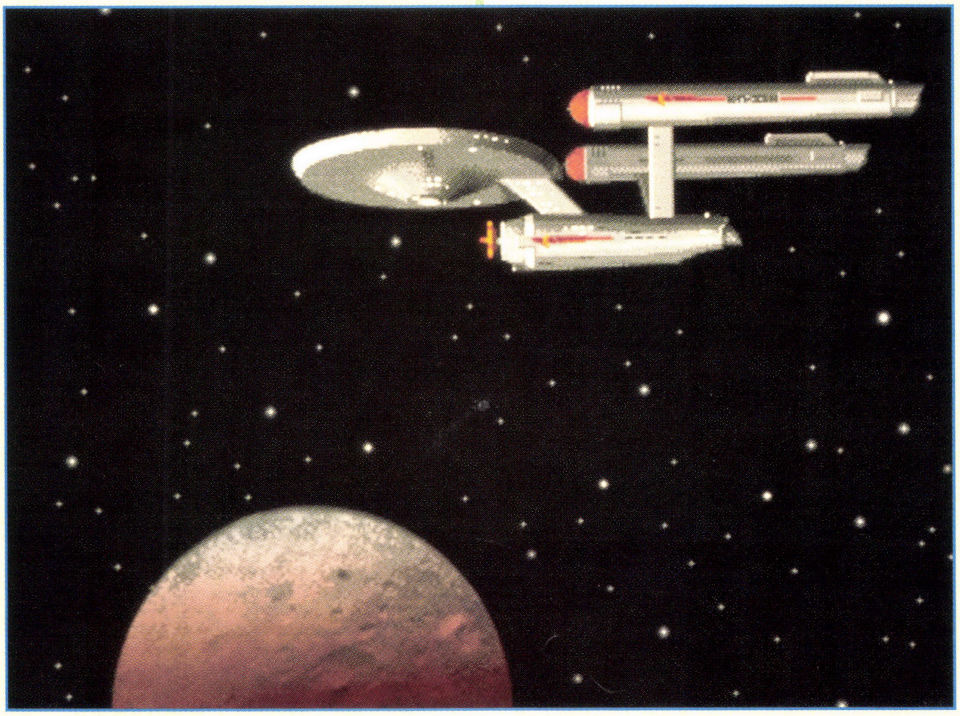
TTI has announced that consumers will be able to purchase the same display unit housing the TurboDuo in selected Toys 'R' Us stores nationwide. The 24" x 28" x 22" unit comes without hardware and will cost $349.99. Consumers interested in the display should call TTI at (310) 641-4622. The promotion is currently scheduled to last until spring of 1993.

Berkeley Systems Develops Star Trek Screen Saver

Berkeley Systems, creator of the top-selling computer screen saver, *After Dark*, is developing *Star Trek: The Screen Saver* for both the Apple MacIntosh and Microsoft *Windows* for the IBM PC.

The screen saver will display tribbles, the transporter room, Klingons, Romulans, the *Enterprise* and other images from the popular television show and movies.

Sound Source Unlimited Inc., Paramount's licensee for computer sound effects, will provide the digital sounds for the software.



Computer Game Sales Increase Despite Recession

The Software Publishers Association has announced that, in spite of the recession, sales of computer software in the first quarter of 1992 were up 19.8% over the first quarter of 1991. Entertainment software sales were up 38.8%, accounting for $65.5 million in sales in the first quarter of 1992.

Surf Warriors Game to Appear in Film of Same Name

New Line Cinema and Sega of America have entered a joint licensing agreement for the upcoming movie *Surf Warriors*. Sega will produce a game based on the Rob Schneider and Leslie Nielsen movie for the Sega Genesis, Game Gear and Sega CD, in addition to providing videogame footage to appear in the movie.

Atari Moves Entertainment Division

Atari has relocated its Entertainment Division marketing staff to Atari's corporate headquarters in Sunnyvale, California. Any consumer inquiries about the Atari Lynx should be directed to: Customer Service, Atari Corporation, 1196 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

EA Adds Six CD-ROM Affiliates

Electronic Arts of San Mateo, California, will now distribute six additional publishers of CD-ROM products. Following are the new EA affiliates with their first EA releases (if determined): Ebook—*Aesop's Fables, Renaissance Masters, Part 1*; Humongous Entertainment—*Putt-Putt Joins the Parade*; ICOM Simulations—*Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* and *Earth Invitational*; NovaLogic; Pop Rocket Inc.—*Total Distortion*; and Zelos!

Bard's Tale IV to be Accompanied by Novels, Board Game, Danforth Art

Electronic Arts' release of *The Bard's Tale IV*, for the IBM PC and compatibles, will be accompanied by the release of both a board game and companion novels based on the computer-game series.

Baen Books will publish three books, beginning with *Castle of Deception*, by Mercedes Lackey.

Grenadier will release *Bard's IV*, a board game with cover art by Larry Elmore, artist of the book covers and computer-game box cover art. Artist, writer, editor and game designer Liz Danforth will supply art for the computer-game manual.

Konami Becomes Sega Licensee: Plans TMNT Release for the Genesis

Konami Inc. has become an official licensee of Sega of America and will soon begin producing games for the Sega Genesis. Konami's first releases for the Genesis will be *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles—The Hyperstone Heist*, an original game based on the comic-book characters, and an adaptation of the coin-op game *Sunset Riders*. Also planned is *Tiny Toon Adventures*, a Genesis game due in spring 1993.

Top Coin-Ops for August 1992

Figures Courtesy of *RePlay* magazine, based on an earnings-opinion poll of operators.

Best Upright Videos

1. *Street Fighter II: Championship Edition* by Capcom
2. *Mortal Kombat* by Williams

3. *Terminator 2* by Midway
4. *Sunset Riders* by Konami
5. *Captain America* by Data East
6. *Turbo Out Run* by Sega
7. *Double Axle* by Taito
8. *Steel Gunner* by Namco
9. *Super High Impact* by Midway
10. *Space Gun* by Taito

Best Deluxe Videos

1. *X-Men* by Konami
2. *Steel Talons* by Atari
3. *Race Drivin'* by Atari
4. *Final Lap 2* by Namco
5. *Hard Drivin'* by Atari
6. *Rad Mobile* by Sega
7. *Road Riot* by Atari
8. *G-Loc* by Sega
9. *Cisco Heat* by Jaleco
10. *Galaxy Force* by Sega

Best Coin-Op Software

1. *World Heroes* by SNK
2. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
3. *Aero Fighters* by McO'River
4. *King of the Monsters 2* by SNK
5. *Wrestlefest* by Technos
6. *Fatal Fury* by SNK
7. *G.I. Joe* by Konami
8. *Raiden* by Fabtek
9. *Rim Rockin' B-Ball* by Strata
10. *Undercover Cops* by Irem

Top Video Games for July 1992

The lists of top-selling video-game software are provided courtesy of Babbage's.

Top 10 Super NES Games

1. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
2. *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* by Nintendo
3. *Arcana* by Hal America
4. *Contra 3* by Konami
5. *Top Gear* by Kemco
6. *Final Fight* by Capcom
7. *Final Fantasy II* by Square Soft
8. *Super Battle Tank* by Absolute
9. *Super Ghouls & Ghosts* by Capcom
10. *Super Soccer Champ* by Taito

Top 10 Genesis Games

1. *Evander Holyfield Boxing* by Sega
2. *SportsTalk Baseball* by Sega
3. *Bulls vs. Lakers* by Electronic Arts
4. *Taz-Mania* by Sega
5. *PGA TOUR Golf* by Electronic Arts
6. *John Madden Football '92* by Electronic Arts
7. *Olympic Gold: Barcelona '92* by U.S. Gold
8. *The Terminator* by Virgin
9. *NHL Hockey* by Electronic Arts
10. *Road Rash* by Electronic Arts

Top 10 TurboGrafx-16 Games

1. *Falcon 3.0* by TTI
2. *Neutopia* by NEC
3. *World Class Baseball* by NEC
4. *Vigilante* by NEC
5. *Final Lap Twin* by NEC
6. *Splatterhouse* by NEC
7. *Super Volleyball* by NEC
8. *Dragon's Curse* by NEC
9. *Legendary Axe* by NEC
10. *André Panza Kick Boxing* by NEC

Top NES Games

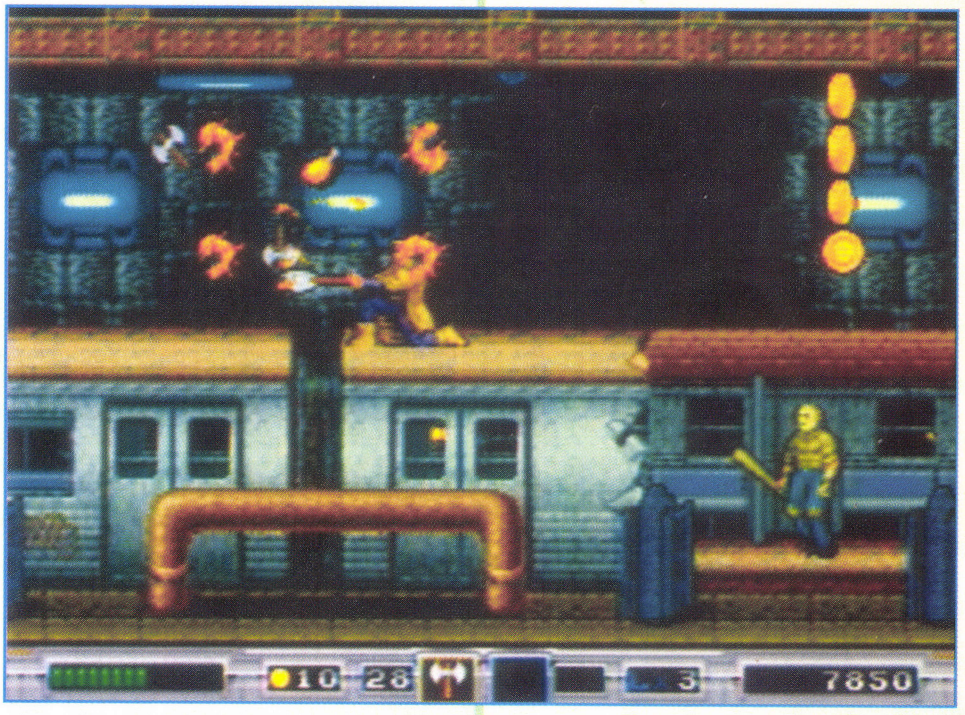
1. *Yoshi* by Nintendo
2. *Tecmo Super Bowl* by Tecmo
3. *TMNT III: The Manhattan Project* by Konami
4. *Ninja Gaiden II* by Tecmo

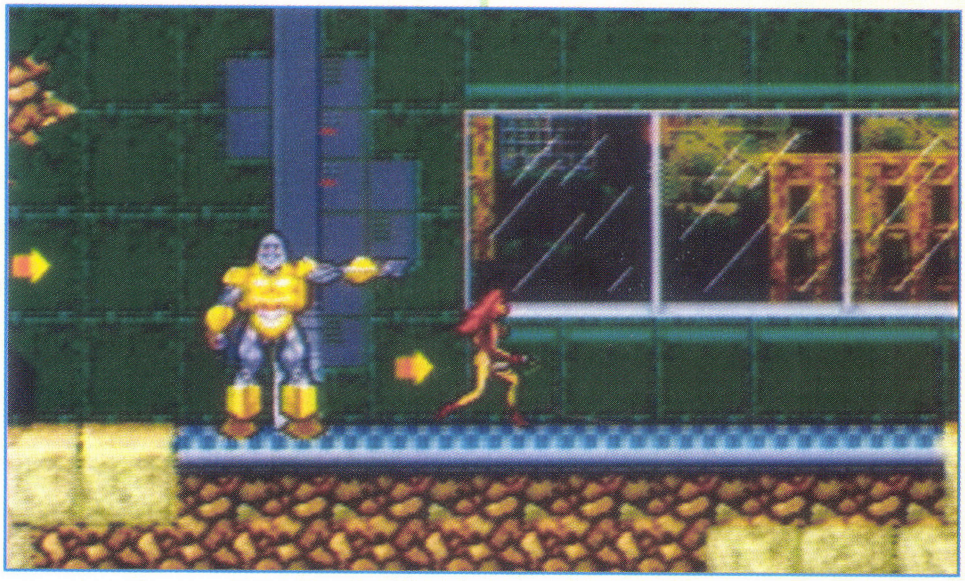
Malibu Comics Merges with Video-Game Developer

Malibu Graphics Publishing Group has merged with video-game developer Acme Interactive to form Malibu Comics Entertainment Inc.

The new company will develop games for the Sega Genesis, Sega CD and Nintendo game systems. Malibu, publisher of the upcoming *Street Fighter II* comic book, has already entered into an agreement with Sega of America and Sages Creation for, respectively, video games based on the popular comic-book series *Dinosaurs for Hire* and *Ex-Mutants*.



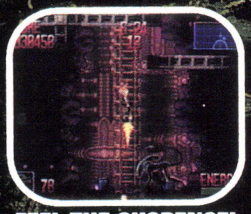




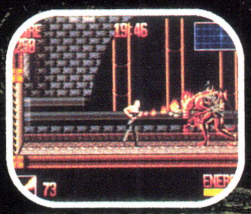
CAN YOU TAKE THE TERROR?



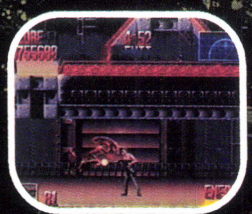
SHE'S BACK!



FEEL THE SUSPENSE!



FEEL THE DANGER!



FEEL THE TERROR!

ALIEN 3™
ON GENESIS™ AND GAME GEAR™!

The Xenomorph are fast, spit acid and are right behind YOU! The motion tracker is your only warning. No time to think, no time to catch your breath...RUN!

Can't see very far ahead in these air ducts. Hard to breathe. Face-huggers can be anywhere. Must find a Queen Alien. The closer you get, the more Aliens you find...better not have them find you first!

Just keep telling yourself, "THIS ISN'T REALLY HAPPENING...ITS ONLY A GAME."

SEGA GENESIS 16-BIT CARTRIDGE · GAME GEAR COLOR PORTABLE VIDEO GAME SYSTEM · ARENA ENTERTAINMENT · OFFICIAL SEGA SEAL OF QUALITY

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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

5. *Darkwing Duck* by Capcom
6. *RBI Baseball 3* by Tengen
7. *Tetris* by Nintendo
8. *Dragon Warrior III* by Enix
9. *Baseball Stars II* by Romstar
10. *Super Mario Bros. 3* by Nintendo

Top 10 Game Gear Games

1. *Olympic Gold: Barcelona '92* by U.S. Gold
2. *Sonic the Hedgehog* by Sega
3. *Clutch Hitter* by Sega
4. *Ax Battler* by Sega
5. *Spider-Man* by Flying Edge
6. *Castle of Illusion* by Sega
7. *Geo. Foreman's K.O. Boxing* by Flying Edge
8. *Chase HQ* by Taito
9. *Crystal Warriors* by Sega
10. *Super Monaco GP* by Sega

Top 10 Game Boy Games

1. *Super Mario Land* by Nintendo
2. *Yoshi* by Nintendo
3. *NBA All-Star Challenge 2* by LJN
4. *The Simpsons* by Acclaim
5. *Metroid II* by Nintendo
6. *Mickey's Dangerous Chase* by Capcom
7. *Dr. Mario* by Nintendo
8. *Hook* by Sony Imagesoft
9. *Pit-Fighter* by THQ
10. *Mega Man 2* by Capcom

Top 10 Lynx Games

(All games this month produced by Atari.)

1. *Batman Returns*
2. *Rampart*
3. *Hockey*
4. *Gauntlet: The Third Encounter*
5. *Toki*
6. *Blue Lightning*
7. *Gates of Zendocon*
8. *Warbirds*
9. *ElectroCop*
10. *Lynx Casino*

Top IBM PC Games for June 1992

The list of top-selling computer software was compiled by PC Research of Washington, D.C., based on sales data received from Software etc., Electronics Boutique, Babbage's and Waldensoftware.

Top 10 IBM PC Games

1. *Aces of the Pacific* by Sierra On-Line
2. *Hardball III* by Accolade
3. *A-Train* by Maxis
4. *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* by Lucasfilm Games
5. *Dark Queen of Krynn* by Strategic Simulations Inc.
6. *Civilization* by MicroProse
7. *Gateway* by Accolade
8. *SimCity* by Maxis
9. *F117A Stealth Fighter 2.0* by MicroProse
10. *Ultima VII* by Origin

Top 10 IBM PC Education Games

1. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
2. *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* by Software Toolworks
3. *Where in the U.S.A. Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
4. *New Math Blaster Plus* by Davidson
5. *Playroom* by Brøderbund
6. *Algeblaster Plus* by Davidson
7. *Reader Rabbit 1* by The Learning Co.
8. *Reader Rabbit 2* by The Learning Co.
9. *Body Works* by Automap
10. *Oregon Trail* by MECC

Dark Horse Comics and Total Vision Form Interactive Software Firm

Dark Horse Comics, the third-largest comic-book publisher in America, and software publisher Total Vision Inc. have formed Dark Vision Interactive, which will produce software based on Dark Horse's original and licensed comics.

The first product to be released will be based on the *Alien* movies and comic-book series.

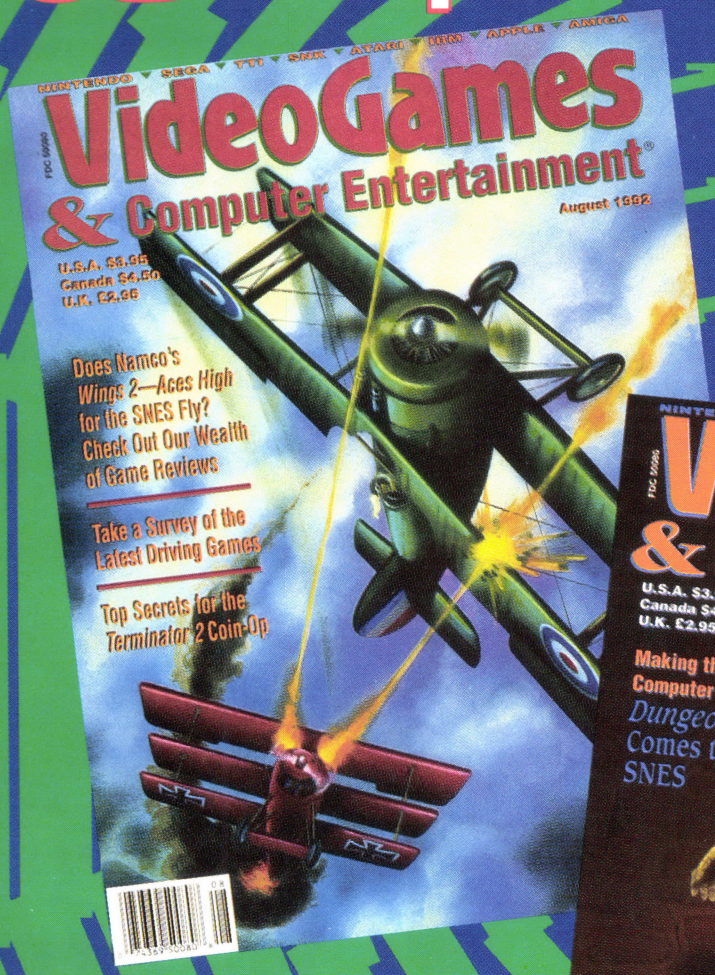


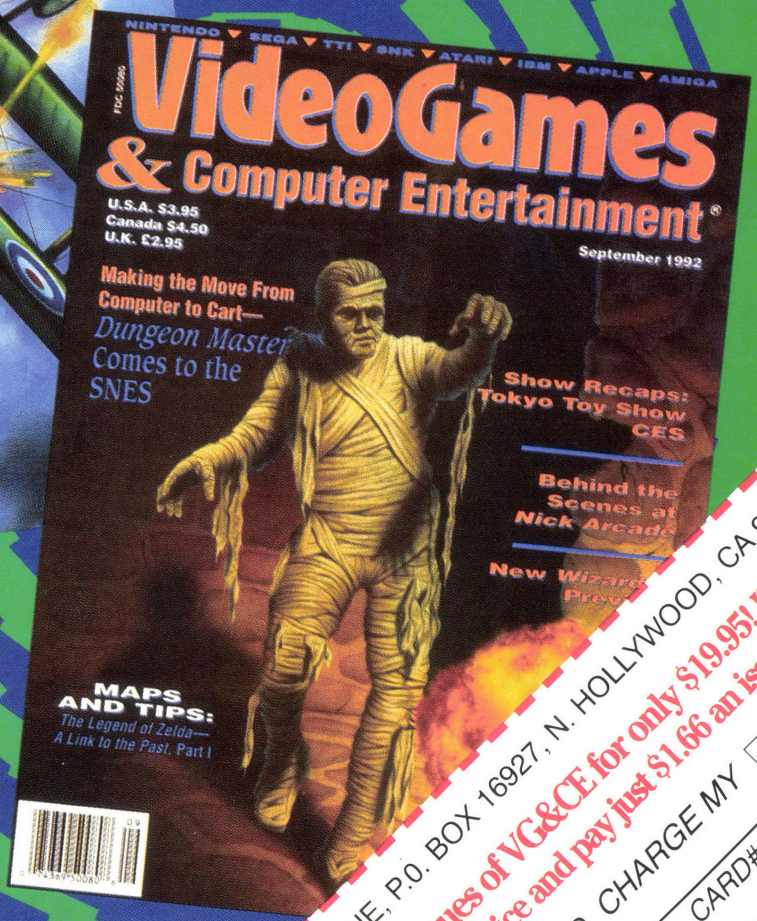




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CMXAA

OFFER EXPIRES JANUARY 20, 1993

16 BIT SNES

THE CULTURE BRAIN NEWSLETTER, FEATU

Big Capacity with 12 Meg ROM!
104 dots x 50 dots characters!
Wow, they're huge! There are more than 150 techniques to choose from. Up to 8 people can participate.
Adopting the Super Defense System!



FROM ACTION MANIAC

FOR 2 G



SUPER NINJA BOY

FUN,FUN,FUN!!

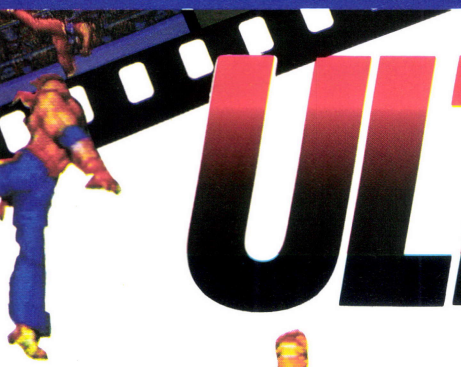
A peaceful life in quiet Chinaland was suddenly thrown into disaster, after the Universal Peace Conference was over. The Emperor's concerns kept growing until Jack and Ryu decided to go out and settle the problem. The places they visited during their expedition were:Chinaland, Mysteryland, Fairyland and Future-land. The more they advanced, the more suspenseful it became. What they found out was a devastating plot.
There are loads of exciting action, cool items, neat vehicles, great attacks, and magic spells available. They are all yours to blow adversaries out of the way of the once peaceful Chinaland.



COMING SOON!

RING GAMES FOR SUPER NES™ AND GAME BOY® !!

Official Nintendo Seal of Quality



ULTIMATE FIGHTER

2in1 FLYING WARRIORS.





FOR ALL GAME PLAYERS FROM BEGINNERS TO EXPERTS!!

3

OPERATION MODES ARE AVAILABLE.

THIS GAME HAS FOUR MODES IN IT. IT'S ALMOST LIKE TWO GAMES IN ONE CARTRIDGE!

FROM ACTION GAME MANIACS TO PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT SO HOT ABOUT ACTION GAMES CAN HAVE FUN! THIS IS THE NEW HIRYU NO KEN SYSTEM THAT PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT!

1. EXPERT MODE THAT FULLY UTILIZES THE HIRYU NO KEN. 2). EXCITING FIGHTING MODE THAT REQUIRES SIMPLE CONTROL. 3). COMMAND BATTLE STYLE, ANIMATION MODE FOR PLAYERS WHO WANT TO ENJOY THE STORY. 4). AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, VS TOURNAMENT MODE WHERE EIGHT PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE.

THE FIGHTING GAME HAS FINALLY COME THIS FAR! THE ULTIMATES 150 TECHNIQUES!

IT HAS GOT YOUR BASIC TECHNIQUES, LIKE PUNCHING AND KICKING. ALONG WITH THROWING, FINISHING AND ALSO THE NEW FEATURE, OVERTURNING TECHNIQUE IS AVAILABLE? OUR OWN SYSTEM REPRODUCES OVER 150 DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES THAT HAS ALL ELEMENTS OF FIGHTING SKILLS! A FIGHTING GAME THAT IS NOW CLOSEST TO PERFECTION!

STORY MODE HAS A POWERFUL ENEMIES TOO!

A MYSTERIOUS ENEMY THAT HAS SUPERHUMAN SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES MOVES SUPER QUICK AND ATTACKS WITH A BIG HAMMER, GIVING FLYING WARRIORS A LOT OF TROUBLE. WHEN YOU FIND THE TUSK SOLDIERS AND THE MOONLIGHT WARRIORS AMONG THE FIGHTERS, TRANSFORM INTO THE FLYING WARRIOR AT ONCE AND FIGHT AGAINST THEM IN THE FIGHTING DIMENSION. USE MAGIC SPELLS AND OTHER ITEMS WISELY! YOU'LL HAVE A SHOWDOWN WITH DARGON AT THE END!

WIN THE TOURNAMENT!
UP TO EIGHT PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE VS TOURNAMENT MODE!

UP TO EIGHT PLAYERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE VS TOURNAMENT MODE!
MORE THAN 150 TECHNIQUES ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM OF COURSE.
YOU CAN ENJOY THE GAME BY YOURSELF OR WITH YOUR GOOD FRIENDS. PUSH THE START BUTTON! LET'S SEE WHO IS GOING TO WIN THE TOURNAMENT!



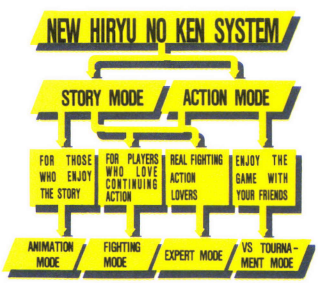






WHAT IS THE NEW HIRYU NO KEN SYSTEM?

THIS GAME HAS FOUR DIFFERENT MODES. FIRST, YOU CAN ENJOY EXCITING ATTACKS AND ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DEFEND YOURSELF IN FIGHTING MODE. SECOND, EXPERT MODE FOR FIGHTING MANIACS. IT'S GOT JOINT TWISTING, OVERTURNING, COMBINATION TECHNIQUES AND MUCH MORE! THE FIRST VIDEO GAME THAT LETS YOU PLAY A FULL SCALE FIGHTING GAME! FOR BEGINNERS AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO ENJOY THE STORY, THERE IS COMMAND BATTLE STYLE, ANIMATION MODE, AND VS TOURNAMENT MODE THAT LETS UP TO EIGHT PEOPLE PARTICIPATE. IT'S A SUPER GAME SYSTEM!



EXPERT MODE

HIRYU NO KEN SYSTEM WAS REFINED AMAZINGLY.

WE CORRECTED THE OLD VERSION'S SHORTCOMINGS AND UPGRADED THE SYSTEM WHICH PRODUCES THE HIGH-LEVEL MODE THAT LETS YOU ENJOY SUPERB FIGHTING ACTIONS! COMMAND OVER 120 FIGHTING TECHNIQUES THAT HAVE ALL THE ELEMENTS OF THE FIGHTING SKILLS!



FIGHTING MODE

YOU CAN ENJOY EXCITING FIGHTS WITH SIMPLE OPERATIONS.

THE STIRRING FIGHTING MATCHES THAT HAVE A LOT OF FIGHTING TECHNIQUES CAN BE PLAYED WITH SIMPLE BUTTON OPERATIONS! EVEN BEGINNERS CAN ENJOY THE FULL SCALE FIGHTING ACTIONS!



ANIMATION MODE

STORY MODE IS MUCH MORE FUN AND INTERESTING!

FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT CRAZY ABOUT FIGHTING ACTIONS, COMMAND BATTLE STYLE, ANIMATION MODE IS AVAILABLE NOW! AND THE SUPER NES™ MAKES THE FLYING WARRIORS SO COOL! ENJOY THE ACTIONS BETWEEN THEM AND DARGON WHO'S RISEN FROM THE DEAD AS A BLACK GHOST!



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Tips are graded on a scale of one to five joysticks. The more joysticks that are colored in, the more valuable the hint.

Blow the dust off those old games, and try out some of our new hints! If you have some great hints and tips for us, just put them on a piece of paper, and send them to: **VG&CE, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210, ATTN: Easter Egg Hunt.** *The author of each new tip we use will receive $10. Write neatly and be sure to include your name and address!*

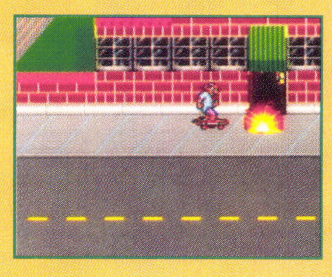
EASTER EGG HUNT

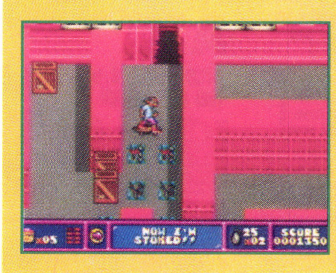
This month's **Easter Egg Hunt** *features a little bit of everything. Turn to* **VG&CE** *for never-before-seen cheats and codes for the Super NES, Game Boy, TurboGrafx-16 and Genesis. Look for more* **Street Fighter II** *weirdness, as well as our first codes for the new Genesis Game Genie.*

BY
CHRIS BIENIEK

Yo' Bro

(NEC FOR THE TURBOGRAFX-16)





Here's a great find that will give you a head start in this breezy West Coast adventure. Skate up to the building directly above you at the beginning of the game and toss a bomb at the door beneath the green awning. Once the door has been blown open, skate through it and you'll find a huge warehouse loaded with power-ups inside. You'll have only 30 seconds to make your way around the room, so be quick about it.

Turrican

(ACCOLADE FOR THE GAME BOY)

We've told our readers about cheat codes for all of the other versions of *Turrican*—why not the Game Boy too? At the options screen, press A, B, B, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, then choose "cheat" for infinite energy. Your energy meter will go down when you get hit, but you won't die when it runs out.







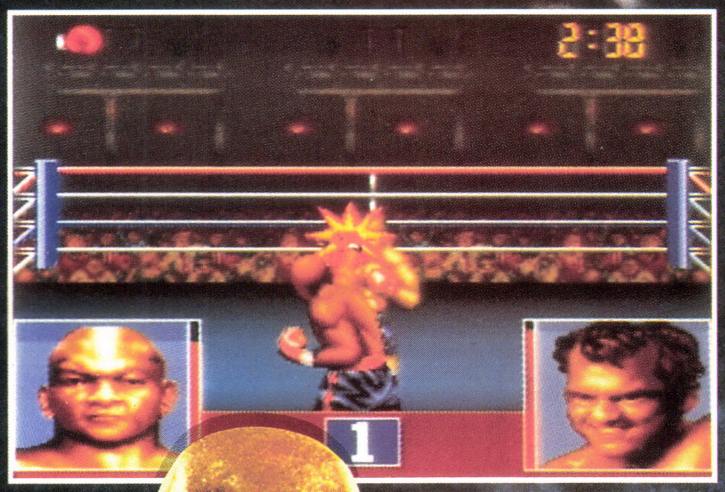
Super Battletank: War in the Gulf

(ABSOLUTE FOR THE SUPER NES)

Johnny Entley of Charleston, West Virginia, was the first to send in this helpful tip, which allows you to inflict a lot of damage with very little firepower. Fire your machine gun at any target and press **START** to pause the game at the exact moment that the target is being hit. The target will continue to flash while the game is paused, and within a few seconds it will be destroyed. With a little practice, you'll be able to blow away an enemy tank with a single bullet!

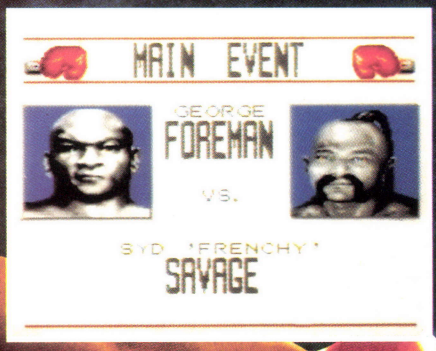
continued on page 30

IT'S A KO!

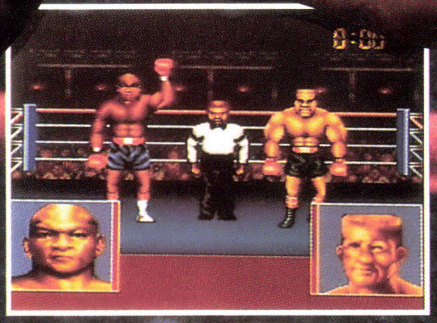


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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

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Street Fighter II

(CAPCOM FOR THE SUPER NES)





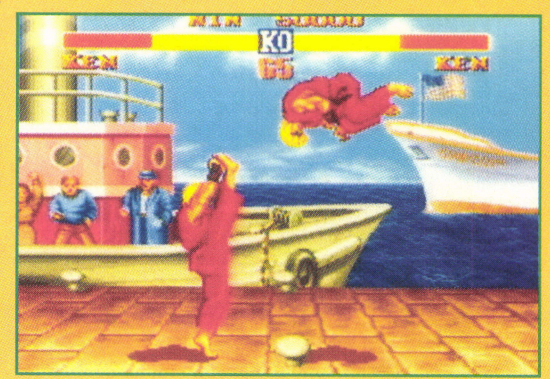
Several of our readers have written to tell us about an easy way to skip ahead and fight against the four boss characters without having to work your way up through the ranks of Street Fighters. During a one-player game, press the **START** button on Controller 2 as if a second player will be joining you in mid-battle. Defeat the new opponent—which is easily done, since he or she is not being controlled by the computer *or* by another player—and wait for the second player's "continue" timer to expire. At this point, the game will revert back to a one-player contest, but you will already have defeated your first opponent.

Repeat this process for all seven of the other characters. After each of them has been beaten once, you'll move on to face Balrog and the other boss characters without ever having lost a round! A $10 *Easter Egg Hunt* "finder's fee" goes to Hank Morris of Hodge, Louisiana, for being the first reader to report this quirk.



In other *Street Fighter II* news, our contacts have discovered a new trick that doesn't require any special codes. Here's how it works: Select a one-player game and *don't choose any character*. After a few seconds, the computer will automatically choose Ryu as your fighter and you'll be flown to the USA to battle Ken in the first match.

As soon as the match begins, press **START** on Controller 2 to enter a two-player game, and choose Ken as player two. When the game starts, don't fight—just let the timer run out for four rounds, a "draw game." When the "continue" screen appears, press **START** on Controller 2 and choose Ken as your character. You'll enter a one-player game with Ken as your opponent! Unlike *Street Fighter II: The Champion Edition*, which changes the appearance of one of the players if you choose to fight against the same character you're controlling, this trick gives you two Kens who are exactly the same in every way.





You can do this trick with Ryu, too. Just start the game with Controller 2 and let the computer pick Ken for you, interrupt the first match by pressing **START** on Controller 1, pick Ryu with Controller 1 for the "draw game" and pick Ryu again with Controller 1 when the "continue" screen comes up.



continued on page 32

Can Furballs Really Fly?

There's only one way to find out. Jump into *Wing Commander*, the game series that defined interactive entertainment on the PC. You're whisked to the front lines and left in the middle of an intergalactic brawl with a bunch of flea-bitten, battle-scarred felines from Kilrah.



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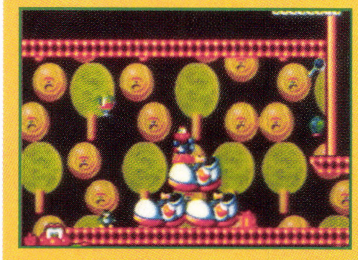
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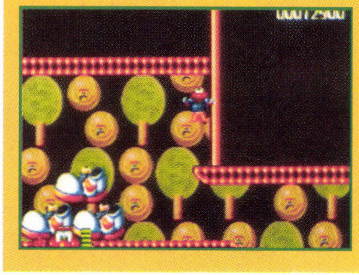
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continued from page 30

James Pond II—Codename: Robocod

(ELECTRONIC ARTS FOR THE GENESIS)





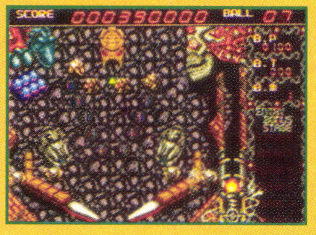
You can refill your power meter in this fishy tale by picking up items in the following order: **P**enguin, **O**il can, **W**ine glass, **E**arth and **R**acket.

Dragon's Fury

(TENGEN FOR THE GENESIS)

Enter DEVILCRASH as your password to start this pinball game with eight balls instead of the usual three.





GAME GENIE CODES

Krusty's Super Fun House

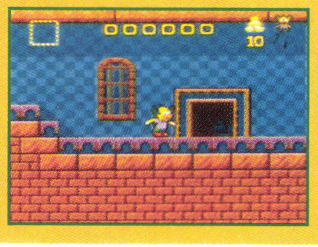
(FLYING EDGE FOR THE GENESIS)

For use with Galoob's Genesis-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer

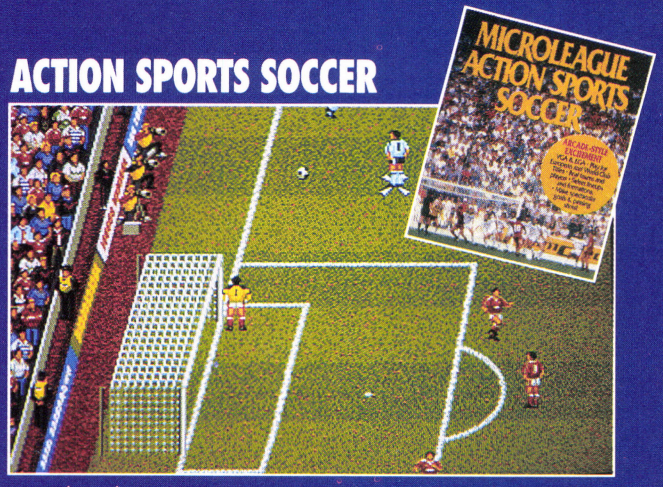
CT5T-AAAW—Start with 20 lives

CVGT-AAEY—Superball magic blocks worth 20 superballs

D3FT-AABY—Pie magic blocks

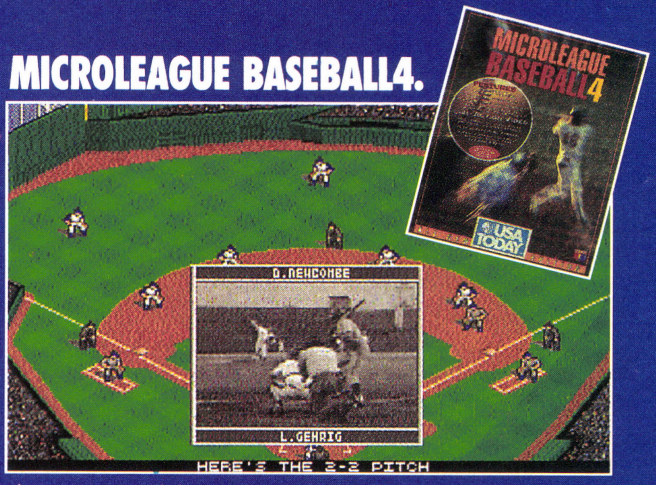


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GAME GENIE CODES

Taz-Mania

(SEGA FOR THE GENESIS)

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LAJT-JABY + LAKT-JAB2—Start the game with 50 lives

CB4T-E6AN—120 seconds of invincibility when star is eaten

AZ4A-FA8A—Each "photo 1" worth five extra lives







GAME GENIE CODES

Sonic the Hedgehog

(SEGA FOR THE GENESIS)

For use with Galoob's Genesis-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer

DDLT-AAGL—High Jump

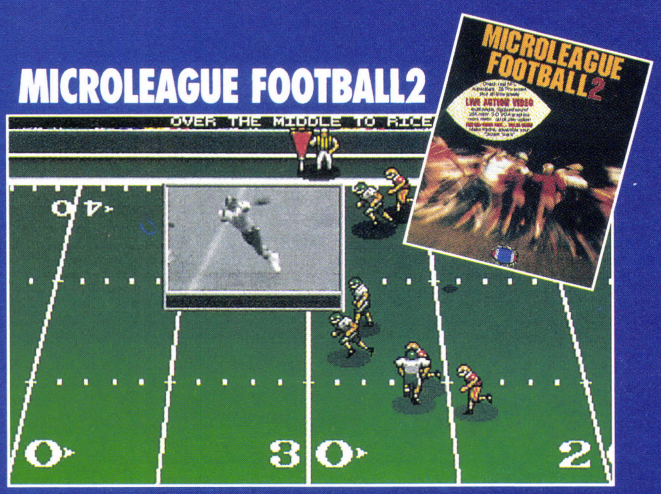
BDLT-AAGL—Super Jump

KDLT-AAGL—Low Jump

AEOT-CABY—Keep running shoes for the rest of the stage, or until you die.



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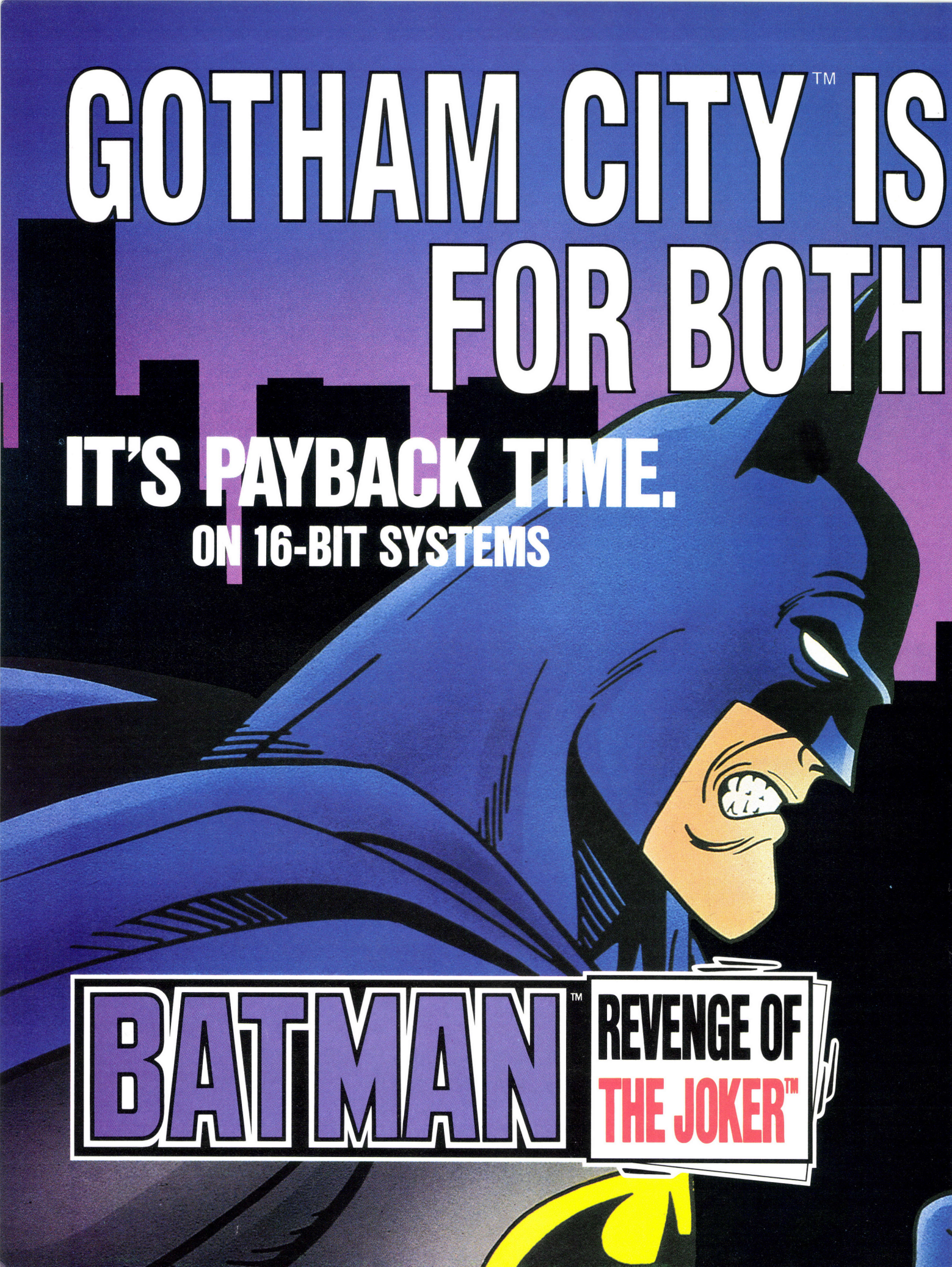
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A "Trek" to Spectrum HoloByte

by Andy Eddy

The San Francisco Bay Area is home to hundreds of computer-related businesses. Apple, Sun Microsystems, Electronic Arts, Autodesk, Brøderbund and many others all make their homes in this vicinity.

However, in a new brick building in Alameda, across the bay near Oakland, is a venerable manufacturer of game software, Spectrum HoloByte (SH). Known for the *Falcon* series of flight simulators and most any "*-tris*" game (*Tetris*, *Wordtris*, *Super Tetris*, etc., all created by Moscow's Alexey Pajitnov and his friends), SH is spreading out to tackle some other products, most notably cartridge software. It has versions of *Wordtris* for the NES, SNES and Game Boy, and is working on a version of *Falcon*™ (which was recently awarded a registered trademark) for the SNES as well, which accompanies the recently released *Falcon* for the TurboGrafx-16. These are all the old favorites, but there is lots of other software on the way—both disk and cart—that will turn some heads. The lineup will feature some new names as well as state-of-the-art versions of veteran titles.

Taking It Way Beyond Space Invaders

My guide on the SH tour was Tom Byron, SH's public relations manager, who led me through the new facilities SH recently moved its operation into. He introduced me to various staff members, some of whom were gearing up for a softball game (SH and Lucasfilm have a joint team). It's obvious that they take their play seriously, and they pay homage to one of the first games, perhaps one that inspired them to do what they do: One of the rooms has a tile floor with certain colored tiles forming the shapes of *Space Invaders* characters. It set the tone for the rest of the visit.

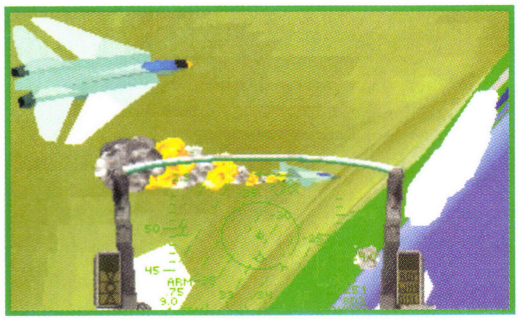
Other SH employees, however, were putting in long hours on the various titles they are working on. Mathias Genser, SH's senior product manager, gave me some details on these works-in-progress:

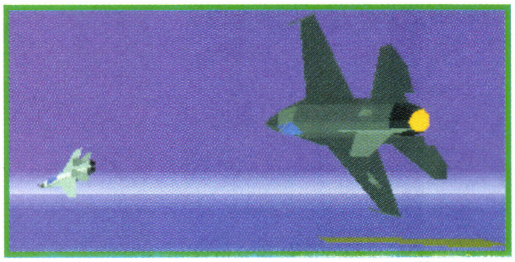
The first I was informed of is a joint venture between SH and Berlitz, the language school. Berlitz has commissioned SH to create a game that will serve as a language tutor, which will work in conjunction with Berlitz's course plan. Currently going under the working title *Cry of the Jaguar*, it will be a Clue-like game that will give the player hints on solving a crime, though knowledge of the particular language will be necessary in order to progress. Scheduled for 1993 release on compact disc, Spanish is the first language that the game will be developed for, and other languages will follow.

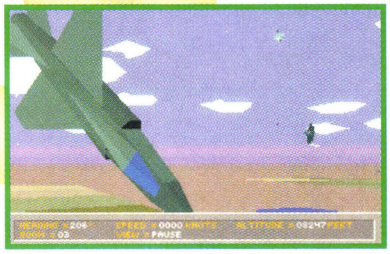
Another title, which was shown in early form at the Summer CES, is a computer chess game in the spirit of *Battle Chess*. The game's creative staff knows that there is very little to set this game apart from others in its genre, so SH has chosen to take a satirical angle: The game is tentatively titled *Chessmeister 5,000,000,000...and One*. To take it a step further, SH is hoping to get approval to license the National Lampoon name for the game, to add an air of comedic authenticity. *Chessmeister*, scheduled for November release, will feature wacky character movements—"lots of animation," Genser noted—and a variety of rendered chess sets that can be loaded on demand. SH is using a Sun Indigo workstation to do much of its character rendering, so a high level of detail is expected. As I was roaming the halls of SH, certain employees were "in costume," getting ready for that evening's videotaping session, which would be turned into digitized game graphics later. It was a little disconcerting to turn a corner and see a pointy-capped character holding a *real* sword, swishing it in the air. It made me wonder what would have happened if I wasn't wearing an authorized Visitor badge.

Another preview I was made privy to was the SNES version of *Falcon*. While the SNES is somewhat too slow to match the awesome detail of *Falcon 3.0*, and it would be very expensive to create an 11-megabyte cartridge (the size of the disk version), SH is working on building a challenging game that's worthy of the name *Falcon*. John Vifian, the programmer on the job, said that SNES *Falcon* should be ready for a second-quarter 1993 release date, will weigh in at 12 megabits and is going to "be like *Pilotwings*, though featuring plane-to-plane combat." The preliminary views I got were very smooth and will no doubt give players the feeling that they are in the plane.

Owners of *Falcon 3.0*, the incredible flight/fighter simulator for IBM PC and compatibles, are also excited about SH's first add-on "campaign" disk. *Operation: Fighting Tiger* will







***Operation: Fighting Tiger* is the first add-on disk for Spectrum HoloByte's highly successful *Falcon 3.0*. The package's smooth 3-D graphics are stunning.**

take armchair combatants into three "theaters": India/Pakistan, Japan and Korea. Expanding on the original *Falcon 3.0*, players face new challenges, missions and aircraft—as well as some new enemies, including an experimental plane from Russia.

Make It So

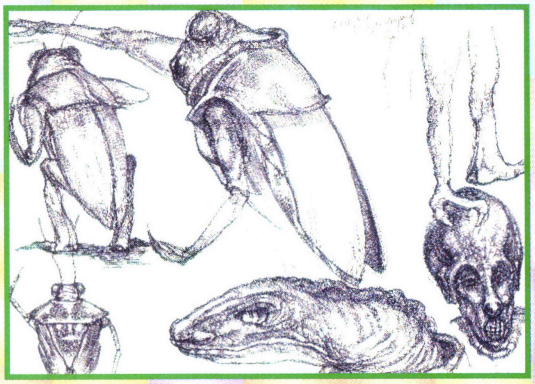
The pride of the SH lineup, however, is one that will no doubt titillate all types of gamers. *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (*ST: TNG*) will be released under the Spectrum HoloByte name for computers (the IBM version is expected for a mid 1993 release, and other computers are being assessed as potential platforms) and for the SNES (scheduled for second quarter 1993). Also, SH *might* develop a Genesis version that would be released under Sega's name (also second quarter 1993). "Though there will be similarities," Genser told me, "I hesitate to call them 'versions' because they are different games." Working with a big studio like Paramount can be a daunting and time-consuming process, so certain segments will appear in all *ST: TNG* versions in order to speed up the approval process.

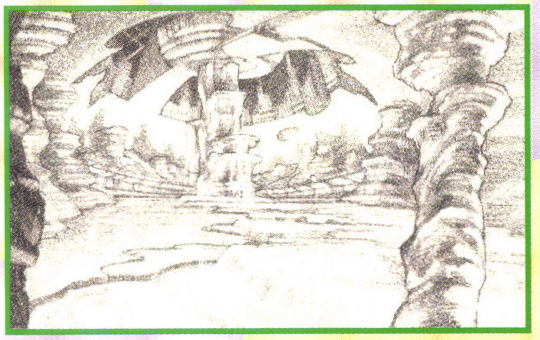
When a pair of Garidian ships pours into your sector, you expect that all hell will break loose. What follows provides an unexpected twist in the plot, but one of typical *Trek* proportions for the extended calm of the universe. At the heart of Garidian civilization—following the split that brought about the existence of the Vulcan race—is the set of four scrolls that provide the guidelines for all aspects of life on Garid. However, mythology hinted at the existence of a "fifth scroll," which reportedly dealt with the Garidian lower class. The lack of this fifth scroll gave the ruling class every opportunity to keep this lower class as a slave state. Your mission weaves the *Enterprise* through a search for the fifth scroll, tangling you in other unplanned plot twists along the way.

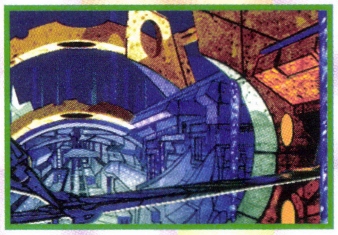
What you can plan on in *all* versions will be a variety of game mechanics: conflict segments, space travel and away-team missions. Unlike most adventure games, it won't be a strictly linear game—if you want to travel to a planet or pass up a confrontation, you're free to—however, everything will take place on a time line. Events will occur on a particular schedule, and you will gather clues along the way to help you finish your mission. The game will also spring on you a couple of different story lines, so it won't be obvious that you are going in the right direction at any given time, though all aspects of the plot will eventually become apparent. When you hit various "nodes" in the time line, you'll trigger events, usually displayed as noninteractive cinematic sequences that lead you through the game sequences. "We want to make it feel like the TV show," Genser said, "that's our biggest challenge."

The game's complexity could prove overwhelming to the novice player, but help will come from an "advice" mode. This mode will come in the form of crew suggestions—how you should deal with characters from Deanna Troi or what weapons to use from Lieutenant Worf—but the advice won't always be your optimum strategy. The decision of whether the suggested path is "good or bad," as Genser noted, is left up to the player.

As complex as the game is, the SNES interface will be as simple for the player as possible. Though, on my visit, it was still being worked on, the interface will be primarily icon-driven, with "pull-downs" for each person. For example, with a few button





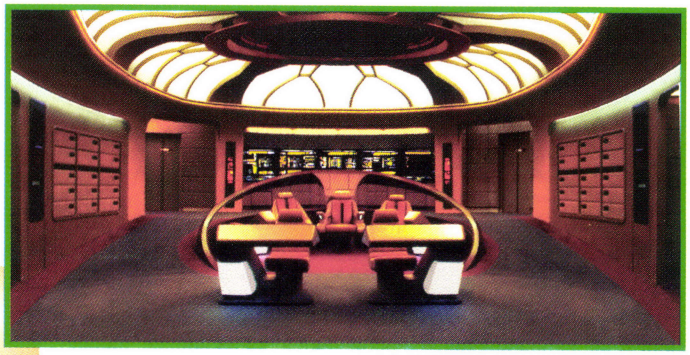


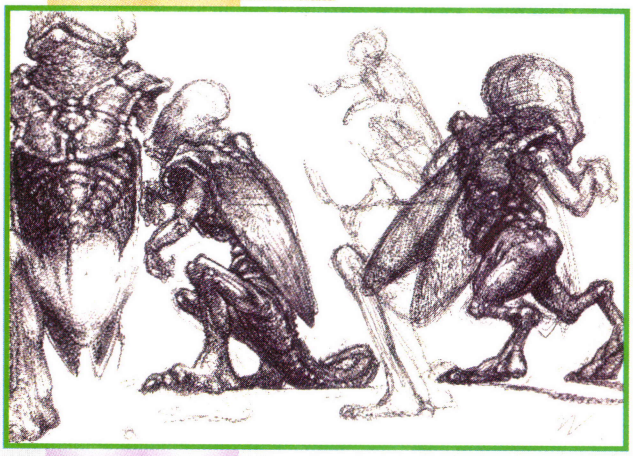


The detail going into SH's *Star Trek: The Next Generation* is incredible, as shown by the involved sketches and screens of alien installations.

pushes, you can lock in on a single away-team member at his location. What's really exciting is the flexibility you have in setting the characters in motion. You can, for instance, put a phaser in Worf's hands and plot a path for him to travel. During this loop, Worf may happen upon another character, and, without your intervention, he may choose a particular action—though, knowing Worf, it may result in a more violent action than you'd prefer! You have to take into account the personality of a character when you make your "command" decisions.







Above left: A planetscape sketch is just one land you will visit.
Above right: An early screen of the *Enterprise*'s bridge.
Bottom: An artist's rendition of a cockroachlike alien.

Up-to-Stardate Authenticity

Scripting the game is Stephen Goldin, who has written 26 books on science fiction (among them, *A World Called Solitude*, *The Eternity Brigade* and a *Star Trek* story called *Trek to Madworld*). From that regard, it's obvious that Goldin will bring accuracy and the proper *ST: TNG* feel to the story. "The reason I like the second show better than the first," Goldin emphasized, "is that the stories are people-oriented, character-related. We can make [the game] exciting, and part of my job is to keep the characters accurate. It's what people are tuning into [*ST: TNG*] for—'real' characters—and in the game they'll be able to get advice from a particular character in their 'voice.' " There's some-

LINKS 386 Pro

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A lot of listening went into LINKS 386 Pro.

Many of the new features and improvements were added in response to direct requests from LINKS users like you! An exciting new feature is our Unique Computer Opponent. Play a round of golf and save your game. The new *LINKS 386 Pro* recorded every shot you made. Send your game off to your buddy and he can play against you right on the screen, shot for shot, as if you were right there next to him! We've also included pre-recorded games from worthy opponents, statistics, a variety of game play modes and much, much more.

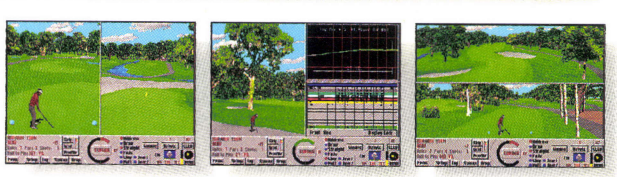
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With the new *LINKS 386 Pro* you're not stuck with just one standard viewing window. With a few clicks of your mouse you can split the screen giving you a real-time reverse view of your shot to the green or add a scaleable top-view that displays the flight of your ball. Scorecard, club distance chart, terrain profile and other panels give you the flexibility to display what you want to view while playing and you can change your viewing setup at anytime!



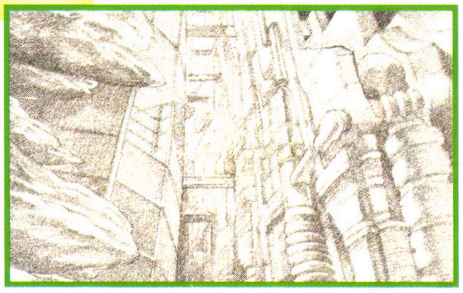
*Actual Links 386 Pro Super VGA Screens

ACCESS SOFTWARE INCORPORATED
4910 W. Amelia Earhart Dr.• SLC, UT 84116
(801)801-359-2900• FAX (801)596-9128

thing to be said for familiarity, which is what many successful designers say is one of the benchmarks of a game that people go back to time after time.

Once you have a story line, the game isn't finished, of course. There are lots of storyboarding and programming decisions and art creations to put in motion. The normal schedule is to meet in the morning and brainstorm for a couple of hours, planning out new twists in the plot. This meeting results in new storyboards and lists of art to be created. This artwork, in the form of pencil sketches, is scanned into a computer and colorized. (Oddly enough, the PC version will have its art originate on the Macintosh, while the cart versions will be created on PC development stations.) Hundreds of amazingly detailed images—a credit to the many talented artists working on the project—are being used to make up the 20 to 50 worlds in the game. The cart versions will offer between eight and ten away-team missions, with multiple visits to certain locations, and the disk version will be even more extensive. The player also has to contend with the requisite space combat and certain aspects of "ship maintenance." All along the way, the player will get a "feel" for the environment, not only from the visuals, but through the use of ambient sounds. You will hear subtle drips, for example, when you enter underground caves.



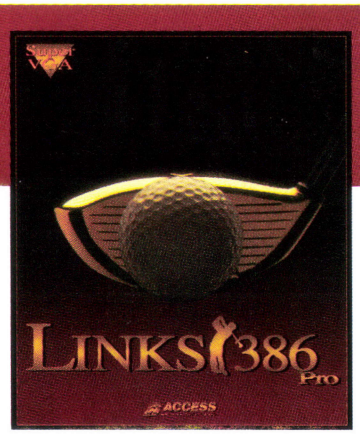


Spectrum HoloByte's *Star Trek: The Next Generation* will offer many worlds for the adventurer to visit through the story line.

All this results in something that Trekkies will be proud of. In fact, according to SH people on the project, Paramount is quite happy with what has been developed up to this writing (early September). And there's still, from the standpoint of game development, a long way to go until the expected releases on the targeted platforms.

It also shows the creative sparks that fuel Spectrum HoloByte products. The company isn't satisfied being known as the people that brought *Tetris* to America. Certainly, this preview of its upcoming lineup shows that SH isn't going to sit back on its laurels.

by the game itself.





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What Reviewers Are Saying about LINKS 386 Pro:

Strategy Plus:

"...with LINKS 386 Pro, *Access* has not so much pushed back the 'envelope' as redefined the term 'simulation.' Right from the opening screen it's clear that something special is happening here."

"...represents a new generation of computer game. Just play it and love it."

PC Entertainment:

"...for sheer, unadulterated realism, no golf simulation equals the performance of LINKS 386 Pro."

"...if you're serious about golf simulations, treat yourself to LINKS 386 Pro. And if you don't own a 386 to run it on, youi've finally got a real good reason to lay out the money for an upgrade."

Computer Gaming World:

"...if you have a fast 386 or 486, think of LINKS 386 Pro as a Ferrari or a Corvette."

"...the ground texturing is dramatically realistic."

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YES PLEASE:Stinkin'Thinkin'
Elektra

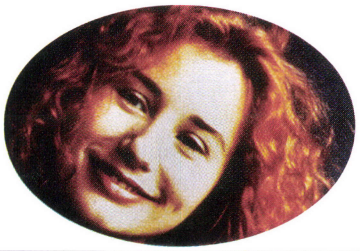
1990's PILLS 'N' THRILLS AND BELLYACHES and the hit single "Step On," drove HAPPY MONDAYS from ecstacy-stained club attraction to mega-watt novas of Britain's dance-rock explosion. Produced by Chris Frantz and Tina Weymouth, "Yes, Please," takes them the important next step. Prepare to move both mind and feet with HAPPY MONDAYS' new single, "Stinkin' Thinkin'."



Ice-T (lead vocals), Ernie C. (lead and acoustic guitars), Mooseman (bass), D-Roc (rhythm guitars) and Beatmaster "V" (drums) are the revolutionary metal band Body Count. At 1991's show-stopping Lollapalooza appearances, on their debut album, and on their around-the-world 1992 tour, Body Count's words and music are as tough as they are smart.



BODY COUNT
BODY COUNT:The Winner Loses
Sire/Warner Bros

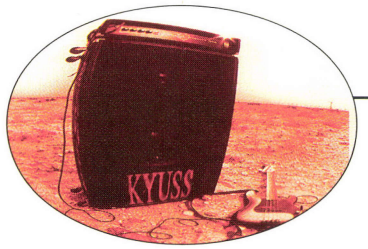


Juxtaposing images of Charles Manson and ice cream, purring winsomely about crucifixion and violation. Through Tori Amos the rumblings of a soul are exposed. Her poetry persists, naked in its frank attempts to reconcile, or at least recognize, the disparities that surround her. Her music is unnerving, discomforting, yet absolutely compelling.

TORI AMOS
LITTLE EARTHQUAKES:Crucify
Atlantic

KYUSS
BLUES FOR THE RED SUN:Green Machine
Dali Records

Take 70's acid rock, add a super heavy bass and guitar sound and the result is - KYUSS - four young musicians from Palm Desert, Cal. who describe their sound as 'A fresh bong load of potent, sticky and hairy musical salvation.' "Green Machine" is the first single/video resonating from "BLUES FOR THE RED SUN."



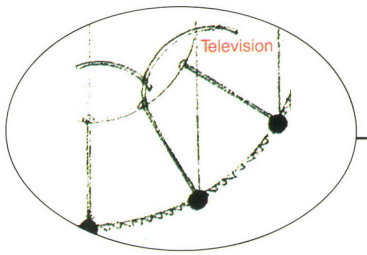
Aztec Camera return to the spotlight with "Spanish Horses," the first release of their fifth Sire album. Singer/songwriter/guitarist Roddy Frame has been crafting soulful, smart pop songs for over ten years, and once again he demonstrates his talents with a beautiful collection of tunes.



AZTEC CAMERA
SPANISH HORSES
Sire/Reprise

TELEVISION
TELEVISION:Call Mr. Lee
Capitol

Tom Verlaine's unique and deep vocals set the tone for the timeless, innovative material on TELEVISION's self-titled new release including the new single "Call Mr. Lee". This highly anticipated album features the wild and distinctive guitar sound that was the trademark of their earlier recordings. TELEVISION is: Tom Verlaine, Richard Lloyd, Fred Smith and Billy Ficca.



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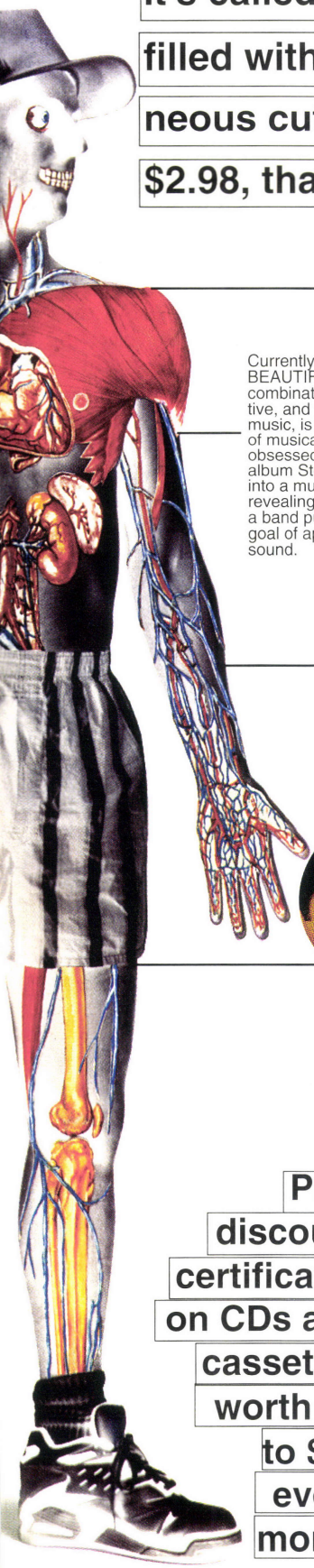
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PANTERA
VULGAR DISPLAY OF POWER:This Love
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Currently on tour, THE BEAUTIFUL's compelling combination of rock, alternative, and punk is expansive music, is the psychic purge of musically possessed and obsessed minds. Their album Storybook pulls you into a musical otherworld, revealing what can be when a band pursues the infinite goal of apocalyptically good sound.

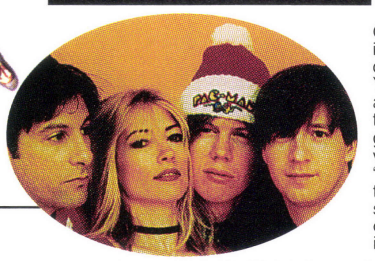
THE BEAUTIFUL
STORYBOOK:John Doe
Giant



Chicago's own MATERIAL ISSUE bring you the edgy pop tune "What Girls Want" from their second Mercury album DESTINATION UNIVERSE. Hot on the tracks of their first album "International Pop Overthrow," MATERIAL ISSUE is back with their signature three part harmony built around brilliant guitar work and complete with multiple pop hooks.

MATERIAL ISSUE
DESTINATION UNIVERSE:What Girls Want
Mercury

SONIC YOUTH
DIRTY:100%
DGC



Gloriously unrefined, strikingly original, unafraid of controversy, SONIC YOUTH are widely acclaimed as the incontestable leaders of underground rock. Arresting both visually and musically, the "100%" video comes from their new album, DIRTY, a staggering sonic chronicle of life in and under America in the nineties.

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VIDEO GAME REVIEWS

Prince of Persia

KONAMI

For the Super NES (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10
GRAPHICS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10
PLAYABILITY	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10
OVERALL	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16/TurboDuo ($49.99)

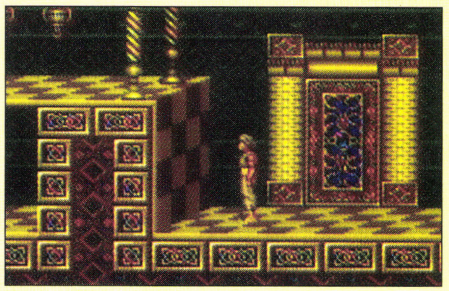
TG-16 owners: TurboGrafx-CD with Super System Card required.

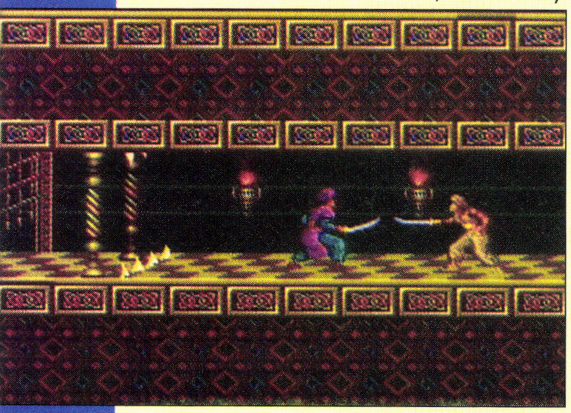
SOUND/MUSIC	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10
GRAPHICS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10
PLAYABILITY	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10
OVERALL	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** 10

The original Brøderbund classic, by Jordan Mechner, has finally made its appearance on the Super NES and TG-CD systems, and will soon on the Sega CD.

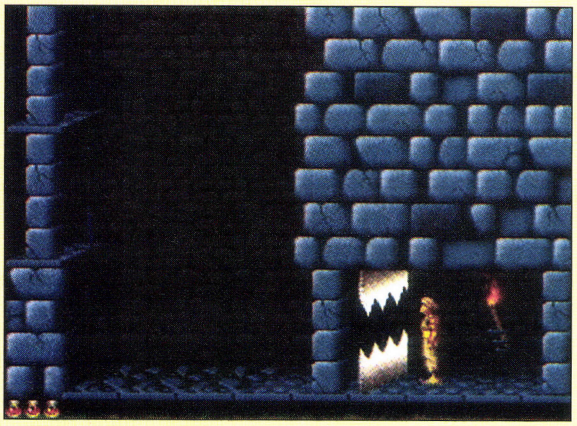
For the few who haven't heard the tale of our Persian hero, the story takes place in Persia during the Middle Ages. One day, The Sultan of Persia goes off on an expedition (or is fighting a war, depending on whether you are playing the SNES or TG-CD version). The government has been left in the hands of an evil minister named Jaffar. The minister decides to take over the kingdom and to marry the princess. As the one and only true love of the princess, the future prince must escape from the dungeon, battle his way past guards, defeat Jaffar and rescue the princess.

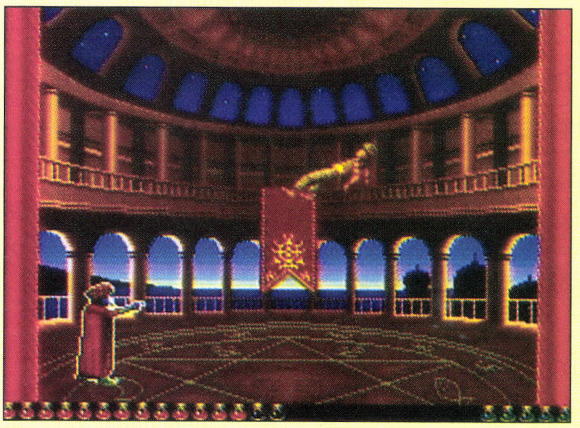
When you look at both versions side by side, the differences you see are purely cosmetic. Each contains







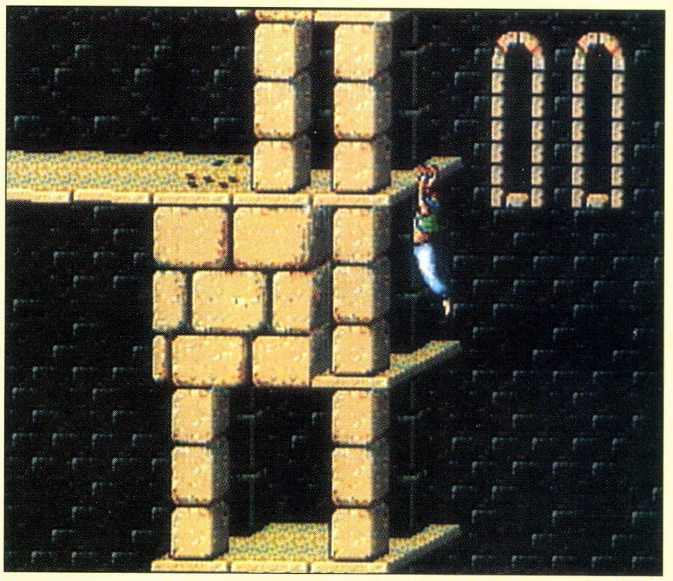


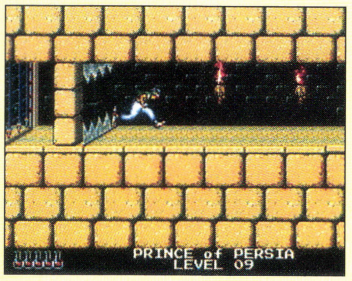


Konami's *Prince of Persia* for the Super NES.

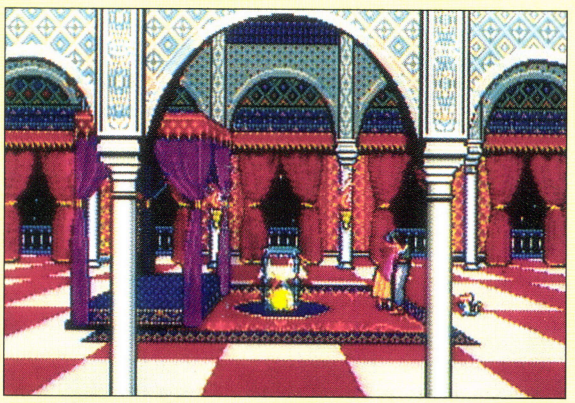
subtle variations that feature the capabilities of its particular game system. The TG-CD version has the more extensive soundtrack, while the SNES version has the more striking graphics and visuals. Interestingly enough, I thought that the TG-CD version looked cleaner and less overbearing. It was easier to tell exactly what I was looking at and if any traps lay in my path.

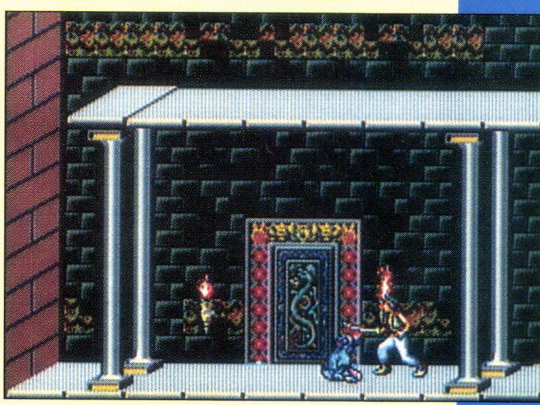
TTI's *Prince of Persia* for the TurboGrafx-16 with CD and Super System Card.





Another interesting graphic difference is that the TG-CD version has lots of blood and gore while the SNES version has none. In the SNES version, if your character falls into a pit with spikes or gets cut in half by a trap, he simply fades away, instead of falling into a pool of blood. Unfortunately, Konami is under close scrutiny from the big "N," as is every Nintendo licensee.

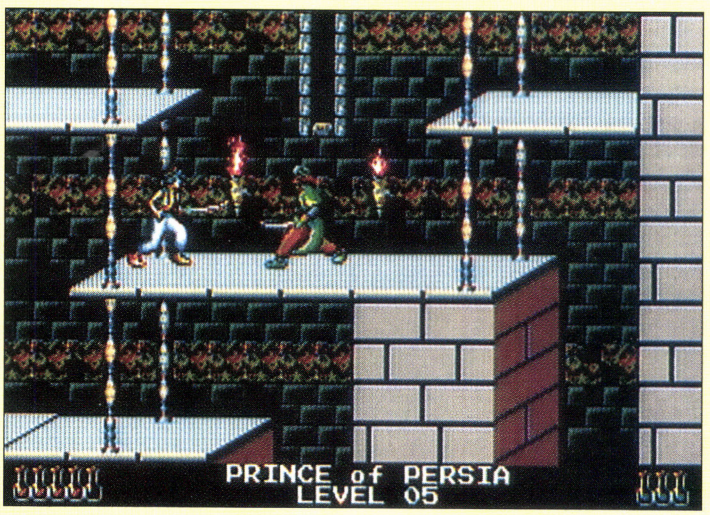




But what about game play? What separates these two from each other? Well, for starters, the SNES version has a total of 20 levels, while the TG-CD version has only 12. The Prince, or character that the gamer controls, moves with the same lanky fluidity in both versions, almost as if he were made of rubber. I did find that the Prince in the SNES version was somewhat flat-footed, and, whenever he took a step, he made a harsh, clanking noise that was annoying. It also seemed a bit harder to control the Prince on the SNES, especially in a situation that could prove fatal (e.g., when fighting a guard or jumping over a pit of spikes).

Konami did incorporate a training mode that lets players run an abridged version of the different levels so that they can get used to controlling the character and discover what obstacles they must overcome during the game. The TG-CD version doesn't have that feature, but, instead, has a speed control select that lets you choose the speed at which battles occur and how fast the character moves. The TurboGrafx game seemed to require a lot of timing of critical maneuvers, and, without slowing down the speed, it would have been almost impossible to get past these areas.

Both versions of the game are really challenging, and both have good and bad attributes. If you have both systems and are trying to decide which version of the game to buy, you might as well flip a coin, because they are simply too much the same game to say that one is better than the other.



—Mike Davila

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10

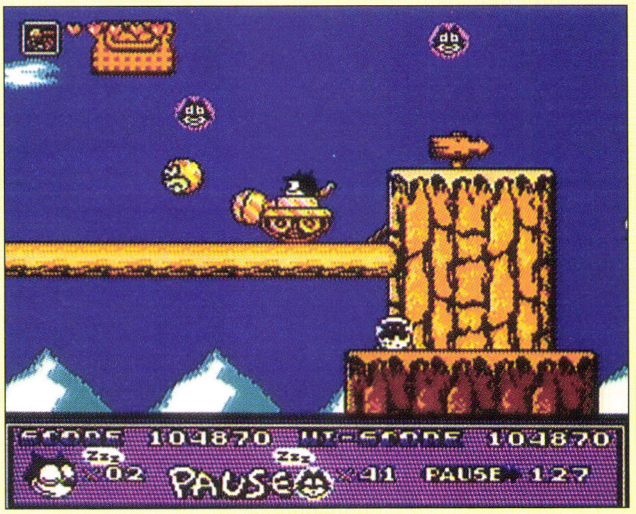
The bloodless SNES version was no surprise, but Chris decided that both titles were a good re-creation of the disk original. Dave felt the game was too tedious.

Felix the Cat

HUDSON SOFT

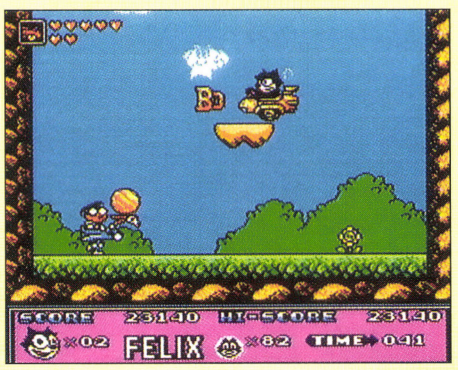
For the Nintendo Entertainment System ($49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10

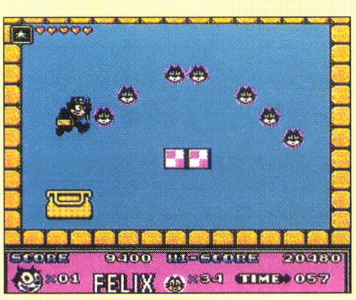


That the name "Felix the Cat" will land on the collective head of America's grade-schoolers with a resounding *thud* is one of the great injustices of popular culture: Among the first marquee-value stars in animation history, Felix was also among the first to lapse into complete oblivion, a fate unresuscitated (as far as I know) by any tacky Hanna-Barbera TV cartoons or Felix the Cat fan clubs. So it's some small measure of consolation, I guess, that Felix has finally returned to these shores in the form of a terrific 8-bit NES game, one that makes comparable carts starring the Flintstones, Mickey Mouse and the Tasmanian (burp) Devil seem like kitty litter by comparison.

To describe *Felix the Cat* as a *Super Mario* clone might be perceived by some as a demeaning comparison, so let me just put it this way: If *Super Mario World* played with the speed and personality of this cart, Nintendo wouldn't have left itself open to a full-frontal *Sonic* assault. Sure, Felix leaps across chasms, floats through the air and battles goofy-looking boss monsters at the end of every stage, but he does so with a feline grace that's a credit to the programmers at Hudson Soft. Also, this cat's power-ups are a heck of a lot more fun than Mario's: Starting out with a gag boxer's glove (the breezy *leitmotif* of this game concerns Felix's "bag of tricks"), he progresses to a magic hat and cane, a single-wheeled go-kart and finally a bulky, boulder-spitting tank from which only his head protrudes. (The animation here is hilarious: Felix looks like Michael Dukakis during his infamous "I'm for a strong defense, too" photo-op.)







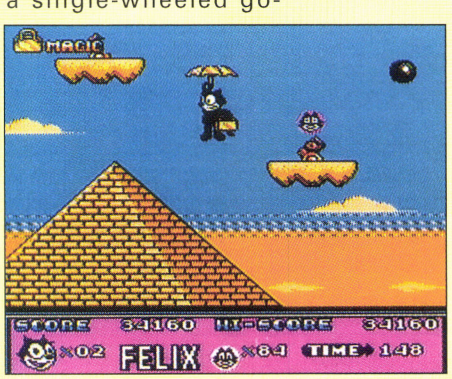


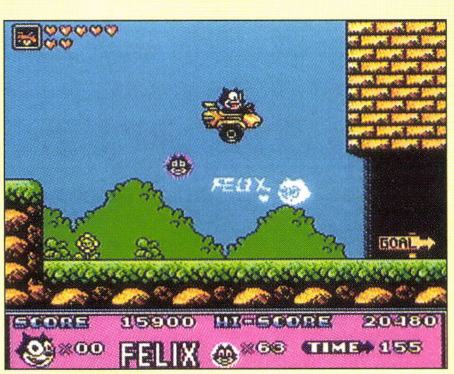
What makes *Felix the Cat* truly stand out is its hair-trigger control, which, when you think about it, is the only area where the 8-bit NES can even hope to compete with its 16-bit cousin. This is simply the most responsive NES game I've ever played, more user-friendly than *Megaman*, less clumsy than *Mario*. This intuitive quality makes the first couple of levels a no-brainer—I suspect even six-year-olds might feel a bit cheated in the challenge department—but matters start to get hairier toward the end of the third stage, when you suddenly realize you're running out of lives faster than a blind kitten on the interstate. Fortunately, especially for younger players, *Felix* has enough 1-ups programmed in that the only time you're likely to stop playing is when you get up and turn the power off yourself.

By this point you may be asking: Just who is this game intended for? Obviously, preteens are the market of choice, though, as I mentioned at the top of the review, *Felix the Cat* probably carries as much name recognition with the kindergarten set as former Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. So let me just put it this way: Felix is as instantly adoptable as a stray kitten in a thunderstorm, and hey, you don't even have to feed it.

—Bob Strauss

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10

Andy said it was nice to see Felix make a return. Chris didn't think the game was too original, but it was inventive. Mike would like to see an SNES version.

Alien³

ARENA ENTERTAINMENT

For the Sega Genesis ($49.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC									9	
GRAPHICS								8		
PLAYABILITY								8		
OVERALL								8		

O.K., O.K., I know what you're saying, "Not another run, jump and shoot game based on a flop!" Yeah, but wait a minute. This one actually has some beef to it, or should I say alien slime.

Just as in the movie, the player, as Ripley, must traverse the maze of tunnels, shafts and subterranean passageways of the planet Fiorina 161, searching for prisoners who have been glued to the walls by aliens. Along the way, you will pick up extra ammo for your arsenal and energy power-ups that revitalize Ripley. If her energy level runs out, so does her life.

*Alien*³ is broken up into 15 stages, and after every third stage you go up against a level guardian, or boss. The stages themselves are further broken down into rescue and exterminate missions.

The game allows you to set the difficulty level anywhere from easy to hard and lets you choose up to nine continues. I found the game very challenging, and, even with the difficulty set at easy with nine continues, I had a really tough time getting through the different stages.

*Alien*³'s play-control mechanism also takes awhile to get used to. A few times I found myself accidentally selecting a different weapon instead of hitting the fire button. It's definitely worth the time to try out a few control setting configurations from the options screen. After you find one that's best suited to your taste, then you can get down to some alien pasting.

The most obviously outstanding attribute *Alien*³ has is its audio quality. As I sat in my office playing the game and writing this review, the occasional passerby would pop in and ask, "Hey, what's that you're playing? Sounds real cool!" The game's sound effects and music definitely add to its excitement. I found myself at one point firing the grenade launcher, not to kill aliens or blast doors open, but just so I could hear the thud that it makes.

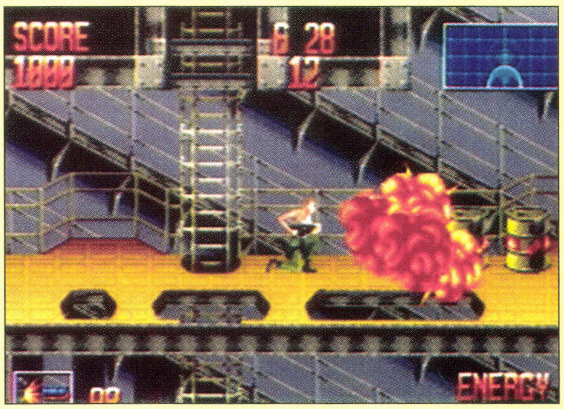
The game does have its drawbacks, however. When Ripley travels through the maze of air vents, it is extremely difficult at times to switch from a lateral to a vertical crawl and vice versa. Also, there are areas where aliens just seem to drop down out of thin air, almost on top of you, not giving you a reasonable amount of time to react.

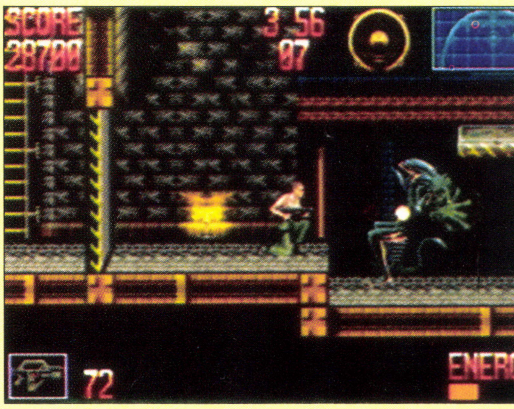
In short, *Alien*³ the game succeeds at providing what *Alien*³ the motion picture failed to—that is, entertainment value.

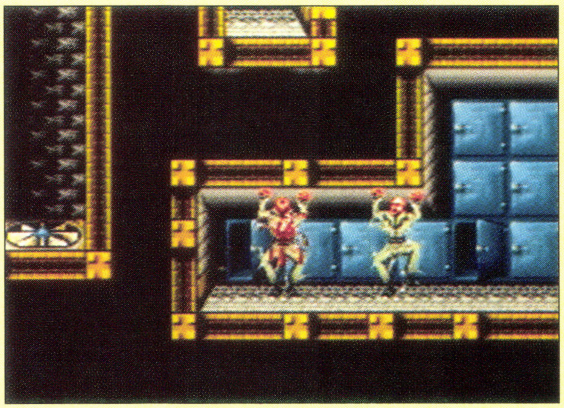
—Mike Davila

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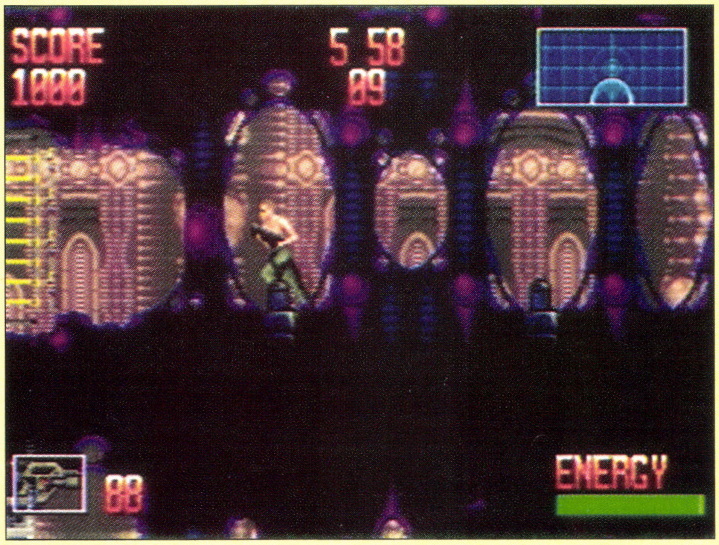
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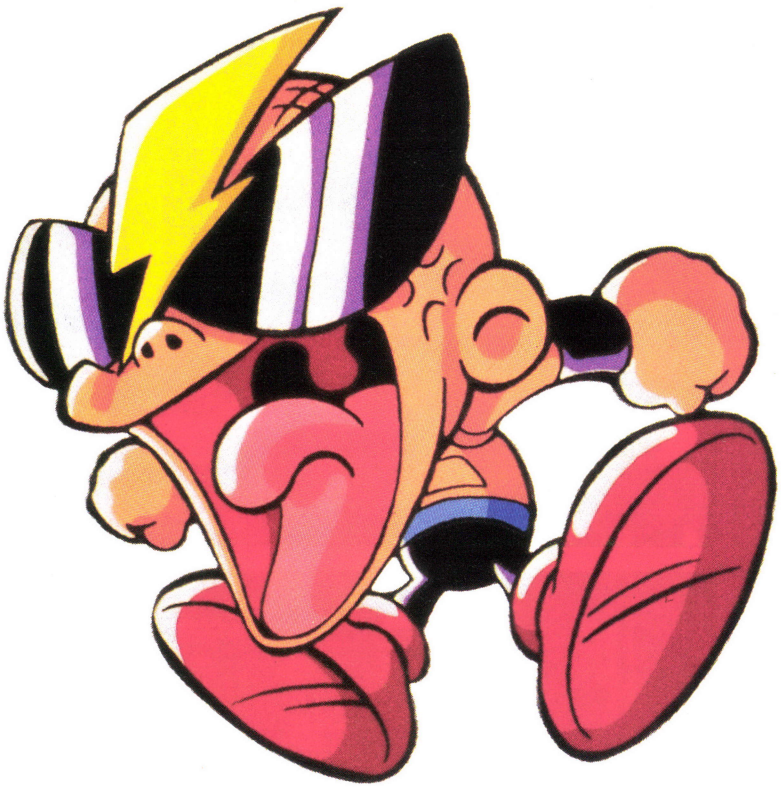


EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE									9	
CB									9	
DM								8		
MD								8		

Chris spoke for all the editors when he said *Alien*³ was a "hot game with great sound." When an alien hatches from a person's midsection, it's really gross!

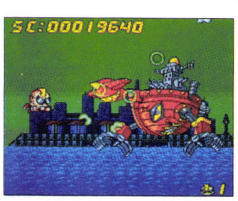
HE STICKS HIS TONGUE OUT. HE GETS SERIOUS HANG TIME. AND HE'S ONLY 4 INCHES TALL.

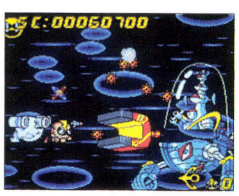


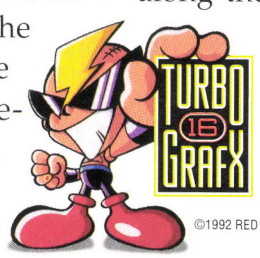
AIR ZONK. FOR TURBOGRAFX.



You don't need a basketball to get serious hang time. All you need is a lightning bolt hairdo and a cool pair of shades. It's Air Zonk, the brand new 16-bit game from TurboGrafx. Where did Zonk come from? Well, his buddy Bonk gets the assist on this one. He created Zonk in his pre-historic laboratory and shot him off into the future to do battle with hoards of cyber robots. In this futuristic setting, you'll soar through 5 different levels of intense action. And if you're lucky, you can enlist one of your friends to help you along the way. So don your shades and lace up your boots extra tight, because there are no referees in this game, and the bad guys always play foul.







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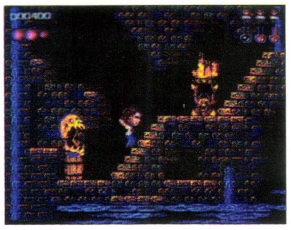
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GHOST MANOR

Man-Eating Fish.



Evil Entities.Deadly Lasers.Possessed Souls.

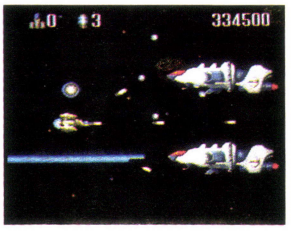
Deserted Planets.

DeadMoon

Deformed Creatures.Out of Control

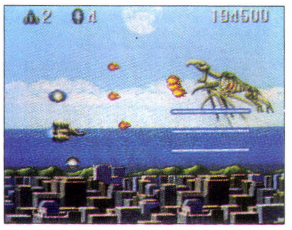


Comets.



Misplaced Missiles.

Torture Chambers.



Blood Thirsty Murderers.

Better Sleep With The Light On.

This Halloween is going to be scarier than ever with Dead Moon and Ghost Manor. The two newest 16-bit TurboChip games from TurboGrafx. Here's the trick. In Dead Moon, you have to save the planet from invading aliens. Or in Ghost Manor, help Arthur escape the haunted house of horrors to save the town. Here's the treat. You can play both games on your TG-16 or TurboExpress. And if somehow you survive either game and want to see what's in store for you next, send for a free 20 minute video about the new Turbo Duo and software line-up. Just include your name, address, age, sex and tell us which game system you use now to:







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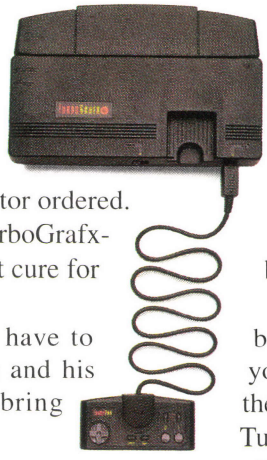
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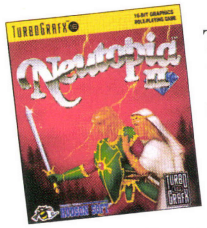
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TAKE THREE OF THESE AND CALL YOUR FRIENDS IN THE MORNING.







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CIRCLE #119 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

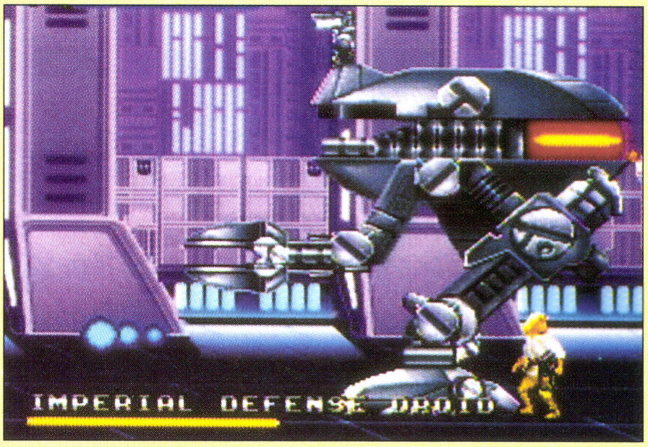
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Super Star Wars

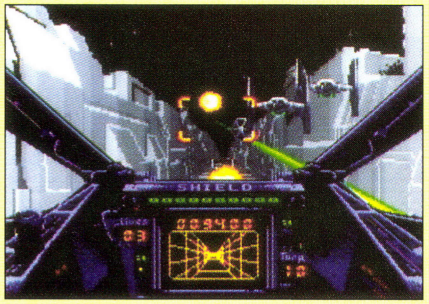
JVC

For the Super NES (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10



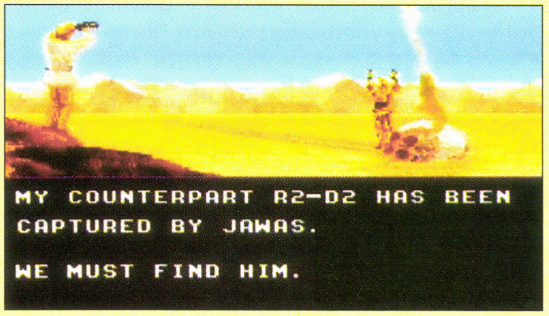
It's been 15—yes, friends and neighbors, *fifteen*—years since *Star Wars* was released upon the moviegoing masses and became the most popular sci-fi film of all time. And, while I'm certainly no "middle-aged man," I've been around long enough to have played just about every video game based on *Star Wars* and its two sequels. Some of them were good, some of them weren't, but none of them can touch *Super Star Wars*.







Super Star Wars loosely follows the story line of the film, which goes a little something like this. A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, the evil Empire rules with an iron fist. A group of freedom fighters has formed the Rebel Alliance to fight against the Empire and liberate the galaxy. In its latest attempt to destroy the Alliance, the Empire has captured Princess Leia Organa, an Alliance leader, and has built the Death Star, a moon-sized space station capable of destroying entire planets.



Here's where you come in, as the young Luke Skywalker. You become involved with the Alliance after finding two of Princess Leia's droids on the surface of your home planet, Tatooine, and delivering them to the mysterious Obi-Wan Kenobi. Obi-Wan asks you to help him rescue the Princess, which means getting off Tatooine, joining the Rebel forces and ultimately destroying the Death Star.

Completing all these tasks means playing through a whopping 14 levels of action. Ten levels are side-view, run-and-shoot sequences, while the other four put you behind the controls of a sandspeeder or X-wing fighter. These levels are tough, even when playing at the easiest difficulty setting, and you only get three continues, so don't expect to beat this game in a day or two.



Once you complete Level 7, you can choose between Luke and two other characters, Han Solo and Chewbacca. You should usually stick with Luke, simply because he's got the awesome lightsaber at his disposal. Most enemies can be taken out with a single swipe of this radical weapon.

The graphics are wonderfully drawn and make effective use of Mode 7 scaling and rotation, particularly the final level, which blows away the ancient *Star Wars* vector-graphic coin-op. The music and sound effects are also outstanding. Some of the sound effects were digitized directly from the film, most notably the sound of your blaster and Obi-Wan Kenobi's timeless words of wisdom: "Use the Force, Luke."

Super Star Wars does have a slight game-play flaw in that some of the restart points (after you lose a life) are *way* before the point where you died. Highly annoying, but I have to admit that it adds to the challenge.

The verdict: *Super Star Wars* is an extremely playable game with gorgeous graphics and sound. Even if you haven't seen the *Star Wars* trilogy, *Super Star Wars* will entertain your brains out.

—Zach Meston

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	**10**

Mike and Chris both commented on the difficulty being too high, but everyone thought it was a great game—"smooth and filled with action" in Andy's words.

George Foreman's K.O. Boxing

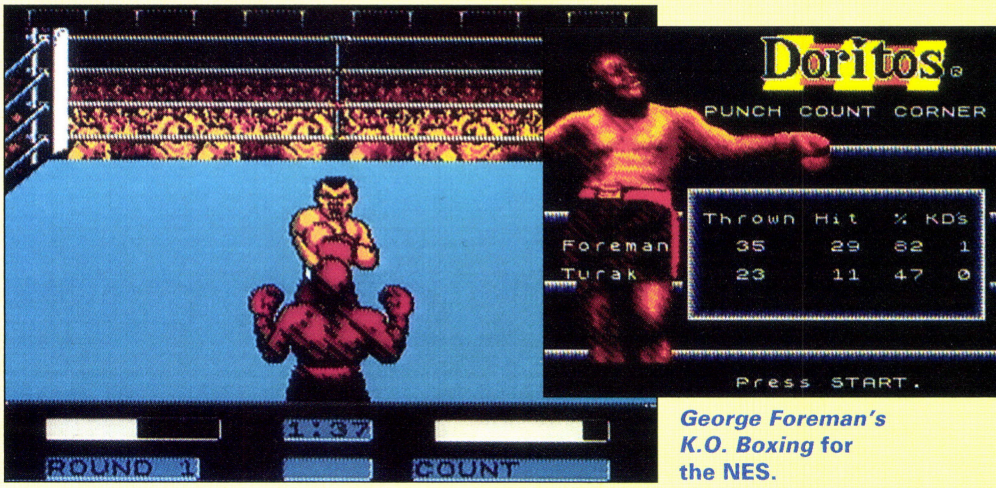
ACCLAIM

For the NES ($49.95)

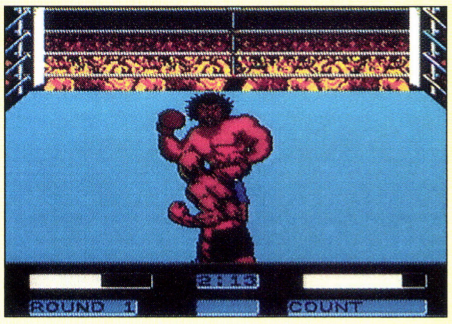
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC						6				
GRAPHICS					5					
PLAYABILITY						6				
OVERALL						6				

For the Super NES ($59.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC							7			
GRAPHICS					5					
PLAYABILITY						6				
OVERALL						6				



George Foreman's K.O. Boxing for the NES.

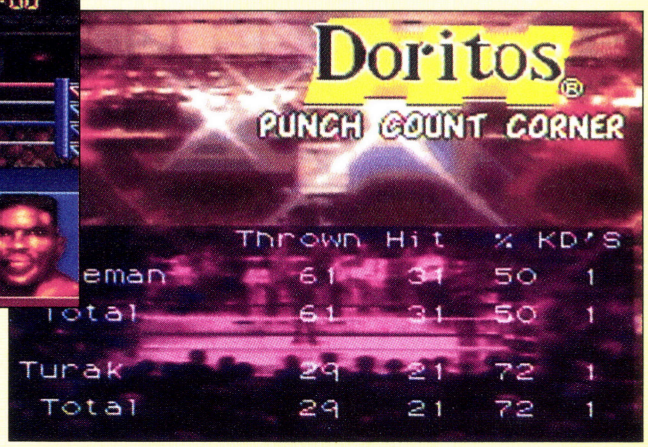


Similar in format to *Punch-Out!*, players fight as George Foreman in *K.O. Boxing* against a series of boxing contenders for the heavyweight belt (12 in the NES version, 15 on the Super NES). Boxing moves are limited to standard punches, jabs, blocking, dodging and the superpunch, which lowers an opponent's energy faster. Should Foreman hit the mat, rapidly pressing the controller buttons ought to revive him.

The first question one will probably ask upon seeing either of the *George Foreman* games: Where are George's *legs?!* The play screen is cropped from the bottom below Foreman's waist.







George Foreman's K.O. Boxing for the Super NES.

It's just his upper torso swinging away at full-bodied boxers.

The NES *George Foreman* appears to have the larger boxing arena but only because it's not cluttered with larger-than-needed mugshots of Foreman and his opponent, as in the Super NES's. The Super NES also gets a slouching referee to call the knockout count and some T & A, too—a bikini-clad woman holding up the current round card.

Graphics for both versions disappoint. Dingy, rusted-out colors dominate the NES *Foreman*, while the Super NES one suffers from stiffly animated and lifeless looking characters. The 16-bit Foreman, in particular, has a body sculpted *too* perfectly. It's so symmetrical and sheeny that George looks like a plastic doll. Coinciding with this, the challengers resemble a line of boxing action figures, playthings to be bought at the toy store. Fresh out of their blister packaging, they're ready for a fight. Appropriately, the card girl's alternate would be Barbie.

Sound differentiates the *Foreman* games from one another. Both feature identical play, but the Super NES game coats it with digitized sound and voices. Hear the bell ring. Hear George and his opponents grunt, huff and puff. Hear the boxing ref shouting the count. Big deal. It's still the same lackluster punching contest as the NES's. Non-digitized effects sound not so hot. The "bop" of boxing gloves against gloves and faces, for one, is very weak and hardly fits in with the digitized stuff.

Not to say the NES version proves any better. *K.O. Boxing* on the NES loses against the much older *Punch-Out!* with regard to graphics, sound and playability—every detail, for that matter. It lacks the well-created, personality-driven boxing characters like those found in *Punch-Out!* As George Foreman would brazenly remark, he was older but still could bring down many of the younger contenders. How very true.

—Howard Wen

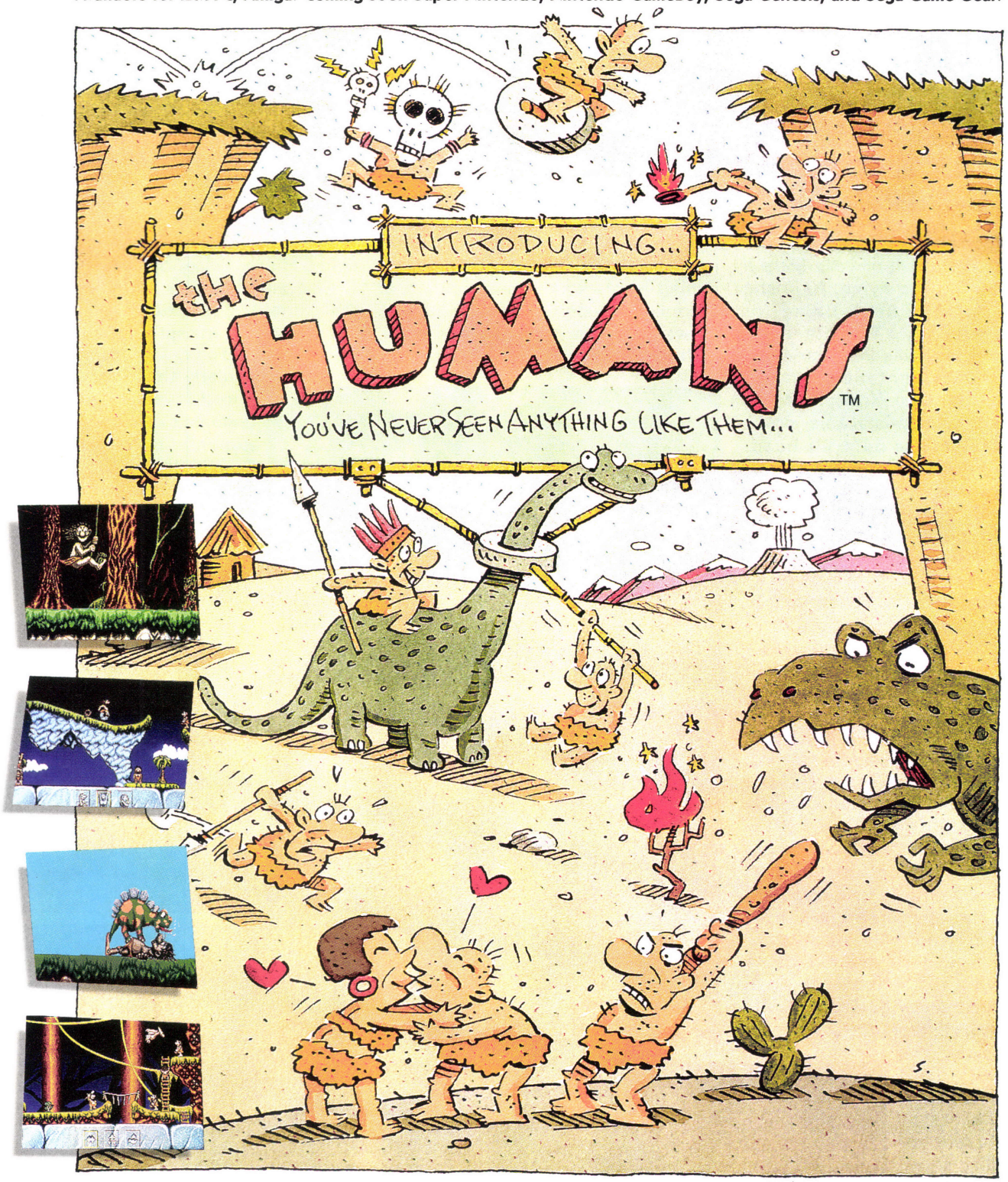
Acclaim Entertainment
71 Audrey Ave.
Oyster Bay, NY 11771
(516) 624-8888

EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE							7			
CB						6				
DM						6				
MD						6				

***Punch Out*, move over—this is one tough game! Mike wished the players moved around the ring more; Chris and Andy felt the SNES version could have been better.**

Available for IBM PC, Amiga. Coming soon Super Nintendo, Nintendo GameBoy, Sega Genesis, and Sega Game Gear.



EVOLUTION...To paraphrase Darwin, it's the survival of the hippest. One wrong move and you're dino-meat, one wrong step and you're a fossil, one fashion faux-pas and you're the laughing stock of the gene pool, baby. Discover tools, survive and multiply or these HUMANS are a time-line footnote. In this world of chaos and carnivores...

...Keep the tribe alive.

GAMETEK

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CIRCLE #120 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Air Zonk

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16 ($49.99)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC						●				
GRAPHICS								●		
PLAYABILITY							●			
OVERALL							●			

Air Zonk has nothing at all to do with either basketball or *Let's Make a Deal*. "Zonk" is the flying, futuristic son-of-a-Bonk, a Bonk being, of course, everybody's favorite headstrong caveman. This is speculation, since the documentation doesn't explicitly mention Bonk, but the resemblance is unmistakable, down to the crack in his bald li'l head. Unlike his ancestor, Zonk doesn't feel compelled to bash things with his skull 'till his retinas detach. Whereas *Bonk's Adventure* was a platform game, *Air Zonk* is a scrolling shooter. Against a variety of multilayered backgrounds that whiz by from left to right (occasionally from bottom to top), you control Zonk as he uses a variety of weapons against hordes of totally bizarre creatures and objects.

As in *Bonk*, the creatures sometimes conceal extra points or gigantic smiley faces that summon a "friend" from a gallery of ten. The friend will hang around and shoot with you, and if you find a second Mega Smiley Face, Zonk and the friend will merge into a mutant fighting machine with awesome offensive capabilities. There are huge boss creatures at the end of each level, and some pretty nasty-bad ones at the end of most of the sublevels, too. The bosses make repeat appearances during the final conflict in the Land of Drool.

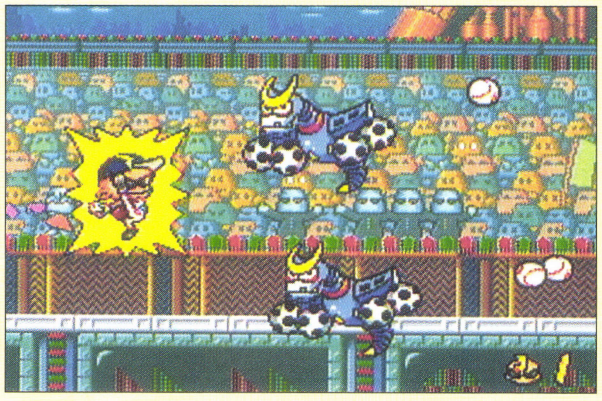
Strategywise, the game really isn't very different from *Blazing Lazers* or any of dozens of other scrolling shooters. What *does* make a difference is the fact that somebody's used more than a little imagination here in creating the weapons, scenery and enemies. As with the long-lived *Megaman* series on the 8-bit Nintendo system, a ton of creativity has gone into creating a quirky, amusing game world. You can shoot playing cards at your enemies, shrink down to tiny size to avoid them or hurl waves of chattering teeth at them.

Enemies include enormous balloons stuffed with vicious piles of goo, two-headed footballs, ferocious skyscrapers with three floors of tentacle-necked enemies and so on. The friends and hybrid Zonk-friend creatures are just as wild; I particularly like joining forces with Ripp the dog and becoming a superbowser that literally mows down foes with the sheer force of his barks. The graphics are the same cartoonish, heavy, black-outlined stuff of the *Bonk* and *Megaman* games. The backgrounds make excellent use of multiplane scrolling, and the explosions are spectacular. There are a few long slowdowns, mostly during the boss encounters, and some flickering, particularly at the top of the screen where the score is displayed. Sound is fair, lots of rhythm and repeating melodies, but no digitized sound effects, voices or instruments.

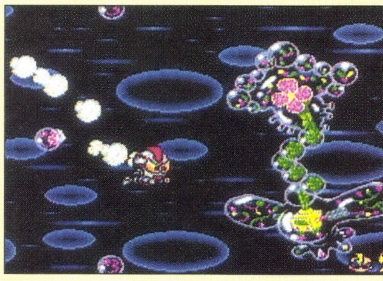
The sole drawback is the length of the game; it's very definitely on the short side and, except on the hardest of the three difficulty settings, not particularly tough for experienced joystick jocks. The unlimited continue feature doesn't help matters. Strong players will be better off renting this one; casual players have less cause for concern.

—Josh Mandel

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(310) 641-4622











EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE								●		
CB									●	
DM							●			
MD							●			

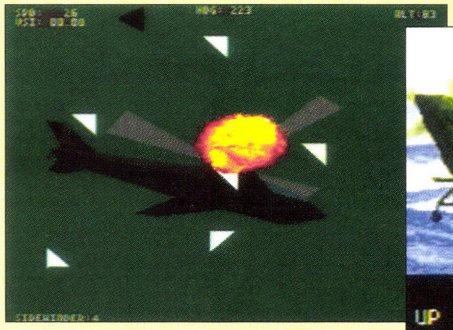
***Air Zonk* is a good progression of the *Bonk* series of games. Dave felt that some of the game play was confusing, but Chris said it's a "shooter with charisma."**

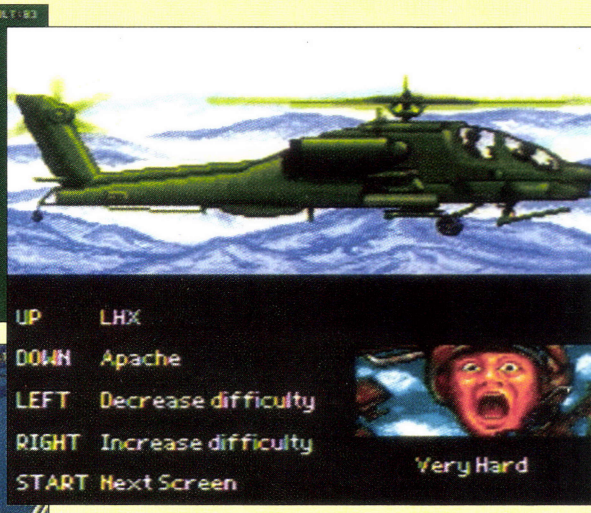
LHX Attack Chopper

ELECTRONIC ARTS

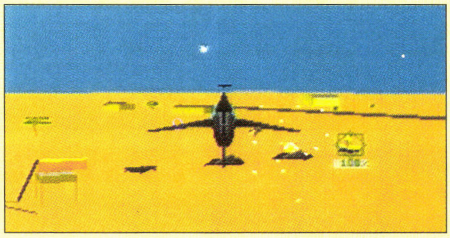
For the Sega Genesis ($49.95)

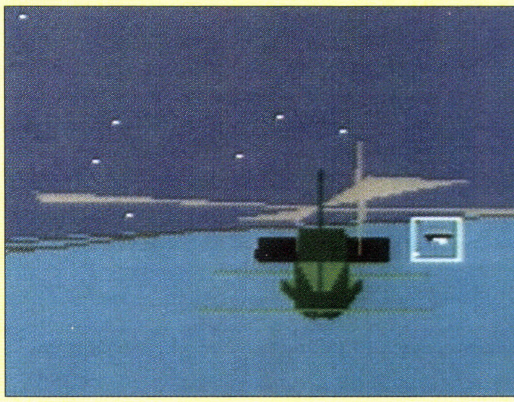
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10













My feeling about flight simulations is best summed up by that scene in *Airplane!* (I *think* it was *Airplane!*) where somebody says something to the effect of, "How hard can it be to fly a plane?" at which point we're treated to a five-minute pan of a cockpit control panel—hundreds upon hundreds of incomprehensible dials, knobs and flickering needles. And, as I've recently found out to my great chagrin, the most challenging kind of flight simulation involves helicopters: a far more complicated piece of equipment than, say, your average Stealth bomber. A chopper can tilt, rotate and hover in midair before stalling, spinning wildly out of control and crashing to the ground in a fiery heap (that is, when yours truly is at the controls).

I will not, therefore, presume to compare *LHX Attack Chopper* to other games of its kind on the basis of vector scaling, polygon-filled graphics or faithfulness to the 1992 edition of *Jane's Military Aircraft*. It appears to be a perfectly adequate flight simulator, meaning you can take off, fly around in circles, flame military and/or civilian targets and return heroically to base. I suspect, though, that even adherents of the genre will be less than thrilled with the visual display, which is so crammed with information about weaponry, targets, airspeed and the like that the folks at Electronic Arts apparently forgot to provide for a legible typeface—meaning you have to scrunch up two feet away from the screen if you want to have any idea what's going on.

What I'd really like to take issue with here—and I'm sure the editors of VG&CE won't mind if I step for the nonce onto my political soapbox—is the blithe, almost offhand way *LHX Attack Chopper* puts you into a military mind-set that even a desperate-for-reelection George Bush might think twice about before embracing. Here's some purple-tinged prose from the first page of the manual: "In the absence of any officially sanctioned retaliation, Libya relentlessly and with impunity supports attacks against U.S. military installations and allied civilian populations ... aggressive and brutal forces in Southeast Asia are trying to crush the lifeblood from struggling democracies as they valiantly struggle for the right to exercise freedoms we take for granted." Guess which countries bear the brunt of your "simulated" bombing runs?

This is scary stuff, and it's especially inexcusable coming from Electronic Arts, which already copped the fiction-is-more-sanitized-than-truth award for its release earlier this year of *Desert Strike: Return to the Gulf*. "NO POLITICS INTENDED," reads the disingenuous blurb in the *LHX* manual, "The game's combat locales are not intended to endorse a political philosophy or military agenda." Sure, I'll believe that when EA's next game features air strikes on Hackensack, New Jersey, and detailed military reconnaissance maps of Belgium. Until then, you can just put me down as a conscientious objector.

—Bob Strauss

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EDITORS' CORNER

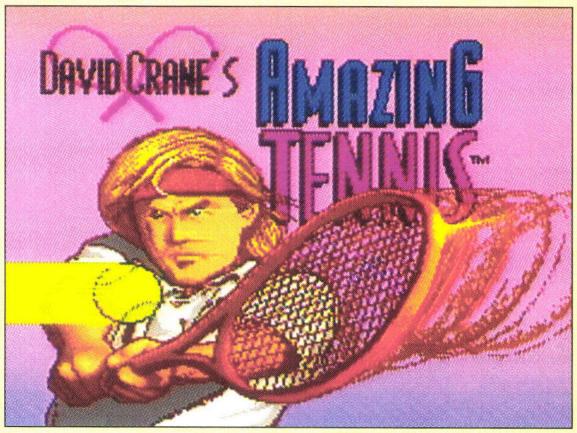
AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10

The editors liked the strategy and attention to detail, but Chris figured that it might be too dry for action fans. Mike and Dave felt some playability was sacrificed.

David Crane's Amazing Tennis

ABSOLUTE ENTERTAINMENT
For the Super NES (N/A)

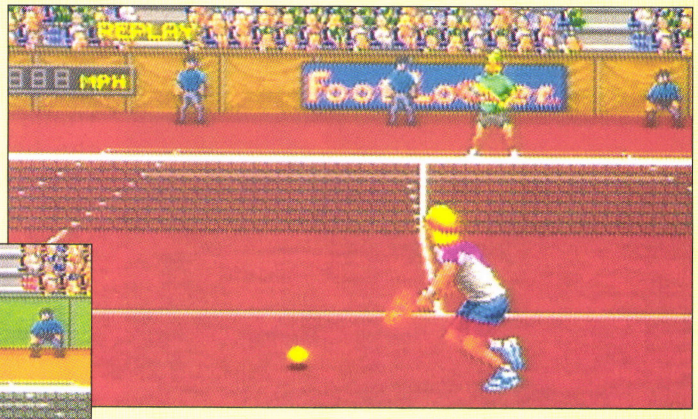
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10

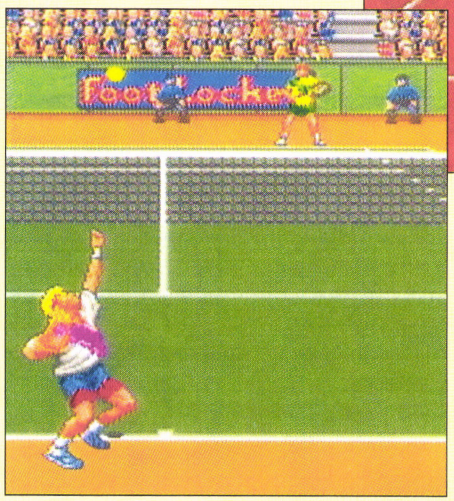


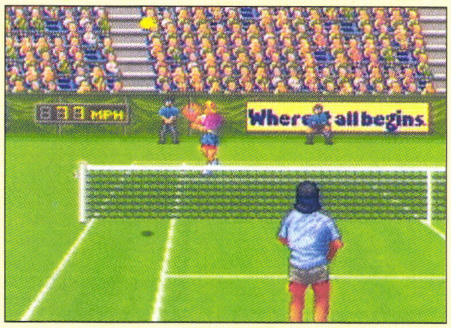
There are many "star" designers in computer gaming, but only one comes to mind in the video-gaming world: David Crane, who created, among many others, the megahit *Pitfall*. Thus, I had high expectations for *Amazing Tennis*. True to the Crane form, *AT* is an excellent simulation with a high degree of realism and superb control. There are, however, two drawbacks, one major and one minor.

The less serious flaw is the fact that this is a singles-only match. There are plenty of computer-operated opponents—22, none slouches—who can be taken on either individually or in tournament mode. (The cart has no battery or password feature, so tournaments must be played to completion without shutting off the system.) You can also challenge a live player head-to-head. However, you can't play doubles.









I didn't miss that at all; the game is strong enough without it.

Now the double fault: One of the game's greatest strengths—its realistic, behind-the-player point-of-view—is also its greatest handicap. Since you view the action from down on the court, behind one player, the other player (that's *you*, half the time) is a small figure in back, in a position far less conducive to judging your placement relative to the ball and net than the forecourt player. Worse yet, when the "front" player is close to the net, the "back" player can be *completely* blocked from view.

When playing against another person, at least you're both dealing with the same handicap. However, the computer players aren't disadvantaged at all by the awkward arrangement, so I'd have suggested to Absolute that the human opponent should always be in front when playing against the computer. Split screens or overhead views would diminish the authenticity that the game tries so hard to achieve.

In all other respects, this is a class game. The animation is fluid and realistic, as are the ball dynamics (you can choose from three different court surfaces), and control of the character, while hard to perfect, is elegant. You never have to worry about backhands or forehands; the computer controls that for you. You must, though, learn to make lobs, drop shots, hard and soft shots; you add aim with the D-button. Aiming's tough, since, if you're running for a ball, you're liable to accidentally aim in the direction you're running if you've held the D-button down a moment too long. Serves are a breeze if you stick to soft shots (I never had a hard serve stay in bounds). Sounds are excellent, from the crisp, digitized voice of ump Frank Hammond to the bounce of the ball against the chain-link fence.

I recommend the game very highly if you're planning on challenging friends (since the handicap is mutual). If you're playing mostly against the computer, you might want to check out the game first, just to see if you can live with the handicap. If so, you're in for an (otherwise) top-notch gaming experience.

—Josh Mandel

Absolute Entertainment
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Glen Rock, NJ 07452
(201) 652-1227

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10

David Crane provides just what you expect from him: a great game with wonderful animation and carefully crafted strategy.



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CIRCLE #121 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

F-117A Stealth Fighter

MICROPROSE

For the Nintendo Entertainment System ($49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10



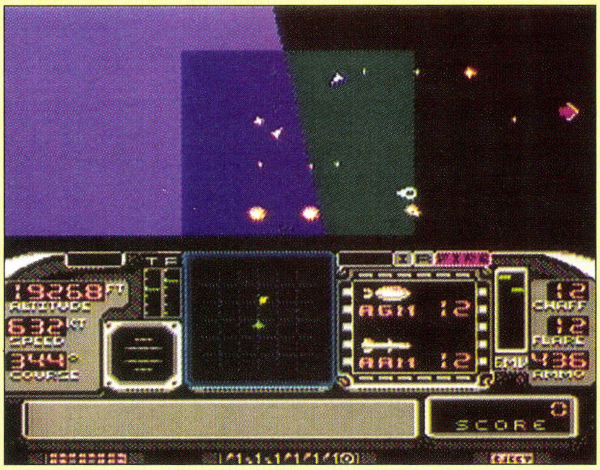
Flight simulators have found a comfortable niche in the home-computer market and have steadily made their way into the home-gaming systems as well. *F-117A Stealth Fighter* is the latest such simulator converted by MicroProse for the NES.

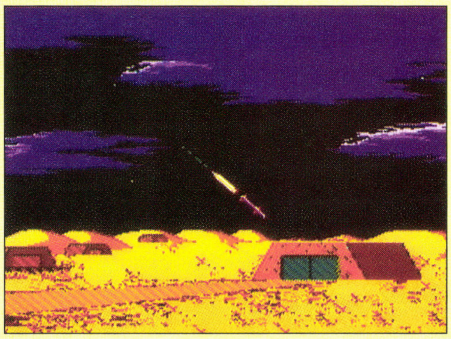
Due to the nature of flight simulators (lots of scrolling backgrounds, complex scaling of images and a wide assortment of controls to be aware of), it's no easy task to cram one into an NES. The NES controller is limited, after all, to one four-way pad and four buttons. *F-117A* manages to fit in the essentials by using these, plus several multibutton combinations, to control your craft throughout the game.

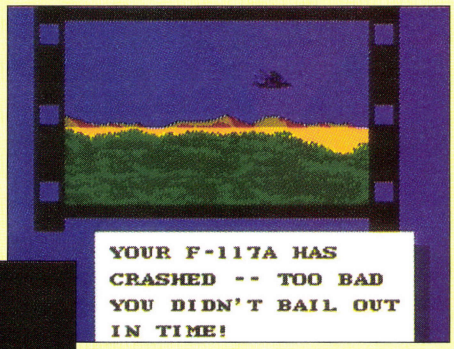
Your objectives are to take your fighter through six different seek-and-destroy missions throughout the world, with an additional three secret missions made available to expert pilots after the initial ones are adequately completed.

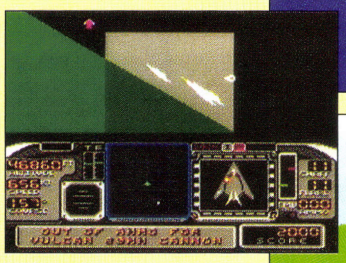
Your craft is equipped with flares and chaff for defensive protection and a vulcan machine gun for standard offensive action. In addition, several offensive missile packages are available, depending upon the type of mission you are to undertake.

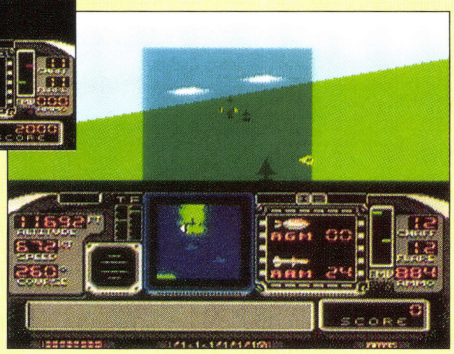
Each mission consists of one primary target and two secondary targets that need to be knocked out. Additional incidental targets are also strewn throughout each theater, and these provide additional challenges along the way. The number of points awarded depends upon which of the four available skill levels you have chosen—the higher the level, the higher the target values. Medals and campaign ribbons are awarded for high scoring, and your rank advances as your score does, so the incentive is there to be thorough in your destruction.











Your cockpit takes up about half of the screen and consists of gauges and indicators for altitude, speed, throttle, local and long-distance radar, weapon stores, damage, etc. There are about 20 indicators of one sort or another that all serve to keep you aware of what's going on.

Other features include an autopilot that will take away the need for consulting your map constantly (though it's easily called up at any time for reference) and a two-player mode for either cooperation, with one player as a weapons officer, or in competition, with each pilot striving to top the other's score.

F-117A gave me the initial impression of having promise as an exciting game to play, but fell short. Though the names change, the missions themselves don't differ much graphically or in game play. The few bugs I found within the game (which MicroProse said *will* appear in the final version) also detracted somewhat.

An artificial horizon indicator (described as such in the manual) in the cockpit does nothing whatsoever. Also, when pulling the plane back to loop over in the opposite direction, targeting sights lock in on dead space instead of the actual target locations, which can be confusing.

Though again a tough type of game to make the transition with the hardware and memory limitations, there have been enough successful flight simulations for the NES for me not to fault the hardware this time around. Definitely one for a preview rental.

—Brent Walker

MicroProse
180 Lakefront Drive
Hunt Valley, MD 21030
(301) 771-1151

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Most everyone thought this was a solid simulation, but Andy noted that it may have been too intricate an effort for the 8-bit NES. Chris appreciated all the options.

Monopoly

PARKER BROTHERS

For the Super NES ($49.99)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC							7			
GRAPHICS								8		
PLAYABILITY								8		
OVERALL								8		

For the Sega Genesis ($49.99)

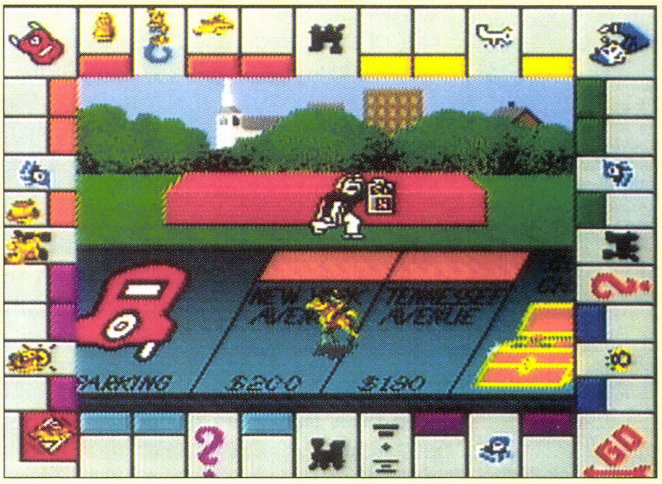
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC						6				
GRAPHICS							7			
PLAYABILITY								8		
OVERALL							7			

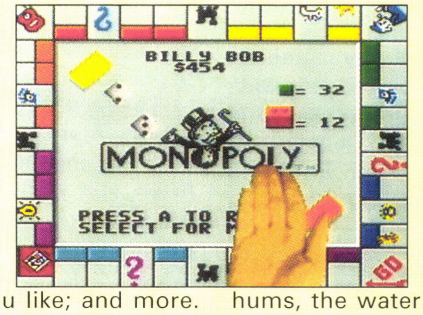
Because Monopoly is probably the most popular board game ever, it's no surprise to see it popping up on all the game consoles. It was already available on the NES and the Sega Master System; now, owners of the Super NES and the Sega Genesis can also do some wheeling and dealing.

The Sega Genesis and Super NES versions of *Monopoly* are virtually identical in game play and options. If there's any difference between the games, it's that the Super NES version has slightly better graphics and sound. Still, both games are so similar that you would need to see them side by side to notice the difference.

As with previous versions, when you begin *Monopoly*, you choose the number of players, from two to four, with any or all players being human- or computer-controlled. You also select personalities for any of the computer players from a library of about ten mug shots, including Gary Cant, as well as P.G. Wodehouse's indomitable Jeeves.

After selecting the players, you can customize the game by choosing any of six options. These options include Set Cash, which lets you give different amounts of money to players; Assign Property, which lets you assign properties to players, without their having to buy them; Place Token, which allows you to place the player pieces at any starting point you like; and more. Using these options, you can set up different types of practice scenarios—not to mention cheat like crazy!





Once the game begins, it's Monopoly as usual. Each player rolls and moves, buying properties, paying rent, drawing Chance and Community Chest cards, etc. The full game board is shown on the screen, with turn details being shown in the center. Many actions in the game are fully animated: Game pieces each have their own style of movement, a cash register gobbles up money, players get slammed behind bars (only the Super NES version shows the slamming jail door), the electric company hums, the water works drips, the railroads chug and much more.



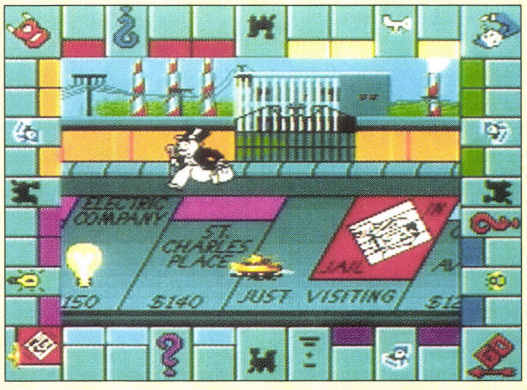
***Monopoly* for the Super NES.**

As more and more properties are split among the players, it's time to do some trading. Both the Super NES and Genesis versions of *Monopoly* give you full control over the trading process, allowing you to select properties and various amounts of cash to swap. However, if you think you're ever going to get a good deal from the computer, you have another think coming. The computer players always insist on getting the better deal.

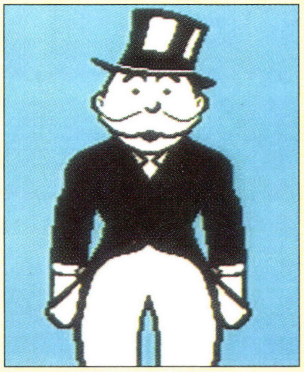
If you're a Monopoly fan and own either a Super NES or Genesis, you'll be delighted with these versions of this venerable board game. Entertaining animations, clever sound effects and easily mastered controls all work together to bring this classic into the 1990s.

—Clayton Walnum

Parker Brothers
50 Dunham Road
Beverly, MA 01915
(508) 927-7600







***Monopoly* for the Sega Genesis.**

EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE									9	
CB							7			
DM								8		
MD							7			

This is a good interpretation of the original board game, and adds animation and sound effects. Mike feels the playability opens up in the electronic version.

Tecmo Cup Soccer

TECMO

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10

A fascinating hybrid of two of the most identifiable video-game genres, *Tecmo Cup Soccer* is truly one of the most unique titles I've played all year. There are sports games that cater to the hard-core statistics freak, as well as those that go after a more arcade-happy crowd, but I've never seen a sports title that incorporated elements of role-playing adventure games—that is, until now.

The game that the VG&CE editors have been referring to as "RPG Soccer" is exactly that: a soccer game in which all of the game's action is broken up into RPG-style menu screens, most of which read simply, "What now?" Your player has been surrounded by two goons from the other team. Do you pass, shoot or try to dribble around them both? The Gems' star player has intercepted a pass and fired a volley shot at your goal. Should your goalkeeper try to catch the ball or dive to punch it away from the net?

As off-the-wall as it sounds, the idea works like a charm. If you've seen the brief interactive close-ups that pop up in sports games like American Sammy's *Ultimate Basketball* or Tecmo's own *Bad News Baseball*, just imagine an entire game made up of sequences like these, with the bottom half of the screen used for menus and a sportscaster's running commentary.

You control the members of the Razors soccer club as they work their way up through the ranks of an international tournament. There are no single-game or two-player options; remember, it's essentially a role-playing game in which the object is to guide your team through the finals and win the cup. That's not much of a plot for a conventional RPG—and the occasionally corny dialogue doesn't help—but the game's sense of humor and clean execution make such shortcomings barely noticeable. The animated graphics are nicely rendered, giving each game a fast pace in spite of the step-by-step decision-making.

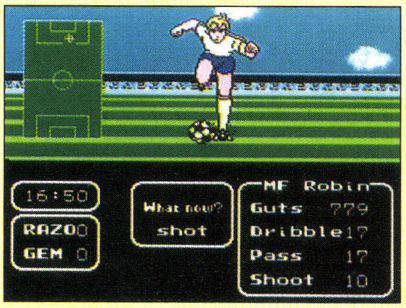
There's even a bit of character development between the team members and the people they interact with. From the mohawked powerhouse, Brook, to the insightful advice of Billy, the team's white-haired coach, nearly everyone gets in a line of dialogue at one time or another. Then there's the soccer "groupie," Anne, whose crush on team captain Robin is as obvious as the heart characters that pass for punctuation at the end of her every sentence. ("Try your best today❤" she offers.) And don't forget Lucas, a skilled player who rejoins the Razors in midseason after an untimely stint on the injured-reserve list.

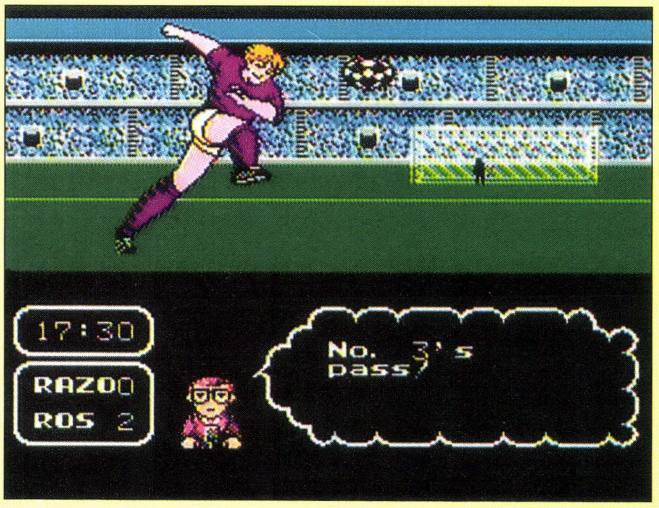
Though it may not have the instant, universal appeal of games like *Tetris* or *Battletoads*, *Tecmo Cup Soccer* artfully caters to fans of sports video games without alienating those who don't care for the faster pace of most sports titles. I strongly recommend this one as proof that there's life in the old 8-bit yet!

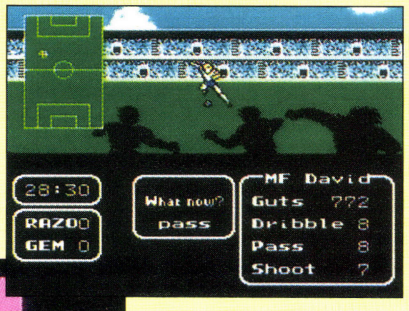
—Chris Bieniek

Tecmo Inc.
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Torrance, CA 90501
(310) 787-2900

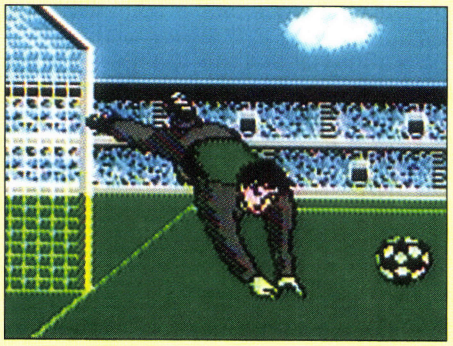












EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10

Every one of the editors used the word "original" in his comments; *Tecmo Cup Soccer* is so far from what you would expect from a video soccer game.



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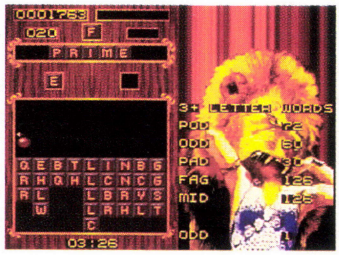
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Loom

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16/TurboDuo ($49.99)

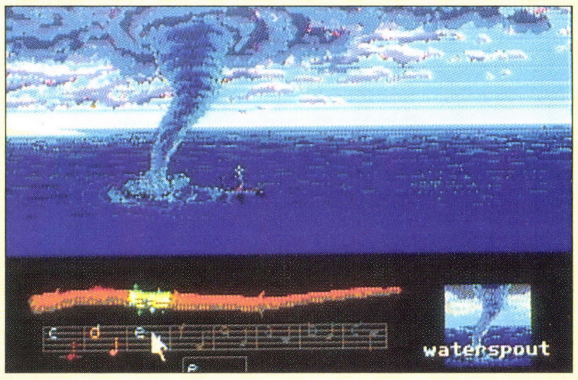
TG-16 owners: TurboGrafx-CD with Super System Card required.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC									9	
GRAPHICS								8		
PLAYABILITY								8		
OVERALL								8		

Lucasfilm's *Loom* broke new ground with computer gamers upon its original release in mid-1990. Its text-free point-and-click interface was one of the finest in existence at the time and served as a model for today's computer-gaming industry to follow. It didn't hurt that the game behind the interface was a classy adventure with a well-crafted plot, a tale of mystical drama in a mysterious world of roaring dragons and exotic cityscapes.

None of this may be of any importance to the TurboGrafx-16 owner, whose ownership of a video-game system is often testament to his affinity for the instant gratification provided by cartridge-based software. But those who have invested in the hardware to play Turbo-CD titles will find a very involving and rewarding experience in the new *Loom* Super-CD.

As the young weaver Bobbin Threadbare, you must travel through the land of the Guild of Weavers and unravel the mystery surrounding the disappearance of the Council of Elders and the secret of your own origin. You'll communicate with animals, draw lightning from the heavens and face the raging fury of a tornado—all in the first few minutes of the game!

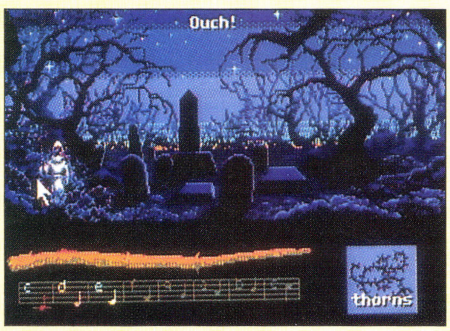












The key to the ease of the interface is the distaff, a type of magic wand that your surrogate discovers early in the game. By playing musical notes on the wand, you can cast spells that have a physical effect on your environment. Playing the notes of a "draft" backwards can reverse the effects of the original spell, and, if you haven't already guessed, the body of the game consists mainly of traveling around to discover new drafts and experiment with their effects.

One of the first Super-CD titles to be released in this country, *Loom* offers lavishly illustrated graphics and a strikingly beautiful digital soundtrack. With its "letterboxed" screen display and orchestral musical score, it boasts the production values of a motion picture. Factor in an emotionally involving plot line, and you'd expect the results to be nearly perfect—and, for the most part, they are.

Unfortunately, there are two nagging criticisms regarding the game's playability that cry out for refinement. First, the literal translation of the original *Loom* interface has left TG-16 owners with a flashing arrow that needs to be dragged across the screen to point at your destination or an object you're interested in. That's great if you're using a mouse or trackball as an input device, but with a TurboPad it tends to be a bit clumsy.

The second gripe concerns the speed of your character as he moves around the screen. Get the lead out, Bobbin—nobody wants to spend an hour watching you shuffle down the corridor that leads to the Hall of the Great Loom, much less take the time to ponder the significance of the elaborate tapestries that hang on the walls there. There's a problem with disk access time, too; I find it hard to believe that the larger memory capacity of the Super System Card is being fully exploited here.

If you can successfully navigate around these two obstacles, the reward is a gloriously satisfying adventure that's unlike any previous TG-CD title. Recommended for the patient, inquisitive gamer.

—Chris Bieniek

Turbo Technologies Inc.
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(310) 641-4622

EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE								8		
CB								8		
DM							7			
MD								8		

The *Loom* CD captures the warmth and intricacy of the original computer adventure, however the slow access time of the CD unit also pushes the player's patience.

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

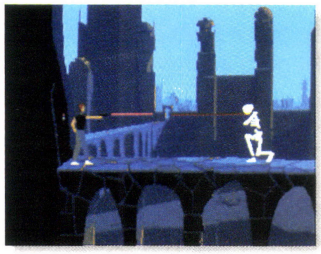


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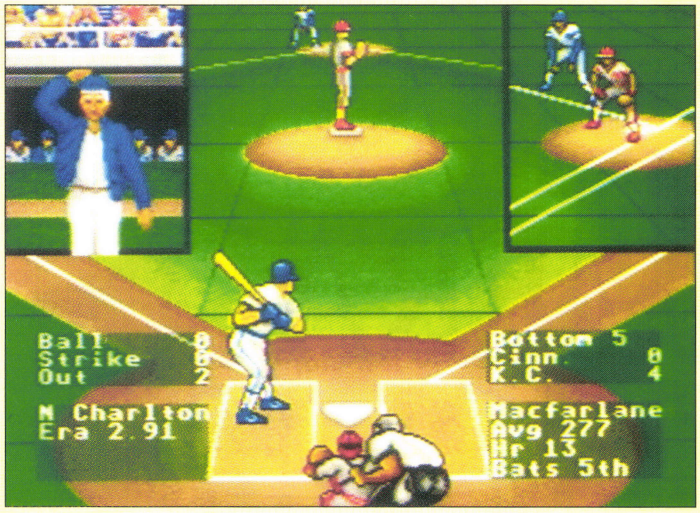
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RBI Baseball 4

TENGEN

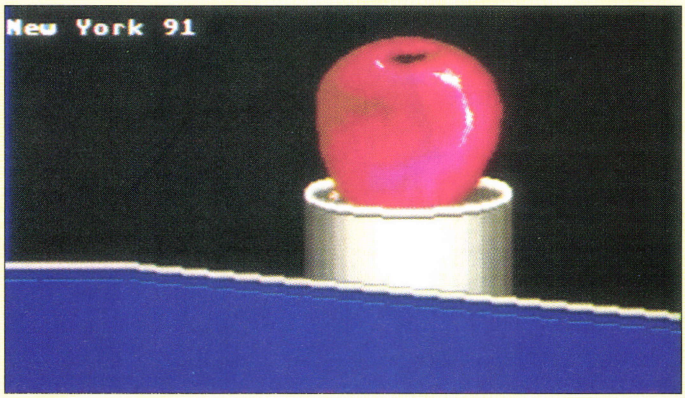
For the Sega Genesis ($54.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10



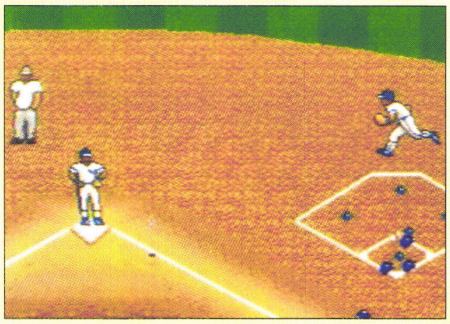
Earlier this year, Sega released *SportsTalk Baseball*, which features actual Major League Baseball players and the *SportsTalk* gimmick of play-by-play digitized speech. But, as usual, a Sega sports game has been outdone by a third-party licensee. Usually it's Electronic Arts making Sega's sports sims look bad (EA's *John Madden Football* and *NHL Hockey* being classic examples). This time, it's Tengen, with *RBI Baseball 4*.

RBI 4 made me go mental with excitement thanks to its massive amount of actual pro stats. You can choose any of the 26 major league teams from 1991, the four division champions from 1983 through 1990 and the All-Star teams from 1989 through 1991. Not only are all 26 major league teams present, but all 26 major league stadiums have been squeezed into the cart as well. The stadiums are just like their real-life counterparts, as you can see for yourself by using the game's Stadium Tour option. The Green Monster looms in Fenway Park; Wrigley Field's walls are smothered with ivy; and Royals Stadium has ecologically-incorrect, water-wasting fountains and waterfalls behind the centerfield fence.









RBI 4 is also loaded with a variety of game play options. You can play a single game, a seven-game series, a division series (against the other teams in your division) or all of the other teams in the game. You can also participate in two highly unusual, and highly entertaining, mini-games: Home Run Derby and Game Breakers.

Home Run Derby is a pure power contest. You choose your team, choose your batter and take your cuts at 20 pitches, thrown at the speed you select, from 60 to 100 m.p.h. The Derby is much tougher than it looks; don't expect to hit more than four or five dingers in most sessions, even with a hulking slugger like Jose Canseco or Cecil Fielder. Timing is everything here.

Game Breakers puts you in 17 different clutch situations near the end of various make-believe games. It's basically like playing one- and two-inning games instead of full nine-inning contests. Kind of silly, but interesting nonetheless.

For all of its game-play strengths, *RBI 4*'s graphics and sound are weaknesses. The stadium graphics are fine, but the players are awkwardly drawn and animated, and the incredibly annoying organ music will have you punching the mute button on your remote control.

And while we're talking about weaknesses, *RBI 4* lacks a true league mode. The various series options are cool, but it would have been great to play a full 162-game season, followed by playoffs and a World Series. Even an abbreviated season with fewer games would have been keen.

RBI Baseball 4 is the undisputed king of Genesis baseball games. The tons of stats and variety of game play more than make up for the underwhelming audiovisuals.

—Zach Meston

Tengen
675 Sycamore Drive
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 473-9400

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10

The blanket opinion was that *RBI 4* was a very good game, though slightly hampered by less-than-optimum control and playability. The stadium tour was fun.

Fantasy and Creatures of Lore

GEMFIRE™

From the Imagination Series



Once upon a time, an evil wizard cursed a dragon and six magicians, sealing their powers in shining gems. The King of Ishmeria inlaid the gems in a crown he called Gemfire. Discovering that the crown held special powers to help his people, he worked great deeds to restore their towns and fields. But the day came when the crown passed to an evil King. He used the powers of the crown against his people until Princess Robyn released the gems.

Now, the spell of Gemfire is broken, and you are in search of its magical stones!

Segas Genesis screen shot shown.



Rivers and fences can aide your troops when you forge into war.

Segas Genesis screen shot shown.



Restore your kingdom to prosperity by developing and working the fields.

SNES screen shot shown.



With a gem in hand you control the powers of a magician.

SNES screen shot shown.



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Gemfire

KOEI

For the Super NES ($69.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC								8		
GRAPHICS							7			
PLAYABILITY						6				
OVERALL							7			

Dissatisfied with consumer reaction to its earlier historical strategy titles, Koei has begun a line of "imaginary games," beginning with *Gemfire*. Originally a good title for the NES, *Gemfire* is reproduced almost exactly as it was for that system, but the 16-bit system makes *Gemfire*'s early flaws more visible.

Gemfire is a battle for the mystical island of Ishmeria (England). The evil King Eselred tries to reconquer the territories that have revolted since his daughter, Princess Robyn, destroyed the magical crown. Unfortunately, the provinces don't get along so well either since a ruler needs the crown's six magic gems to gain total power, and, naturally, they're not too anxious to relinquish theirs in the interest of a common ruler. From there it's a process of bribery, threats, violence and just a touch of luck from the spirits of magic and nature that determines who rules the land.

Players assume the role of one or many nobles in a given family. Some nobles may have control of more than one territory, while others may not control any of them. The player uses *Gemfire*'s vassal system to appoint a computer-controlled character to run the territories that are sufficiently safe from marauding neighbors.

Vassals may not be the most efficient administrators, and the weak-willed ones are prey for opposing families, but players desperate to increase play speed need them. Each territory has a full set of options every month which range from trade and hiring monsters, to making alliances and—for those not quite ready for war—sabotage. Trade, the least exciting, is nevertheless the most common action. Exploiting fluctuations in the price of food (low, average, high) is the best way to build a country's army and domestic strength. Territories not needing soldiers make wonderful economic colonies, and a chance to fully exploit them is worth keeping them free of vassals.

Combat is dealt with on a tactical battlefield with the armies divided into four roughly equal units: cavalry, archers and two infantry units. A "fifth" unit containing the family wizard or any hired monsters may also be used. Competing sides play "capture the flag," maneuvering around permanent and temporary blockades. Food is often the determining factor in victory since large armies are enormously hungry, and the first side to run out of rations must surrender.

Gemfire displayed much promise as an NES game, along with some severe flaws. Patience is critical since there is no such thing as a "quick" game of *Gemfire*. Vassals save time, yet are far less effective than human players. Still, the easiest way to lose in *Gemfire* is by letting the computer control your armies in the combat phase. Even without the useless animated sequences, battle is excruciatingly slow. After plotting moves, players must watch their pieces stroll into position. Graphically, the game is barely a notch above the NES version, but the background music takes advantage of the SNES's capabilities.

Gemfire would be an easy game to dismiss if the market was flooded with strategy games or if it was a poorly designed game: Neither is true, though potential purchasers should banish any thoughts of action or expediency before buying this solid if slow-moving strategy game. Hopefully, Koei will make some changes before it reaches the IBM PC or Genesis.

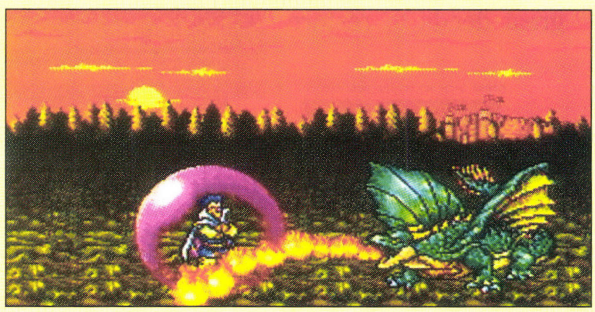
—David S. Moskowitz

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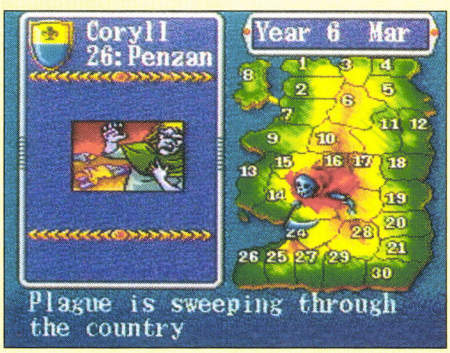










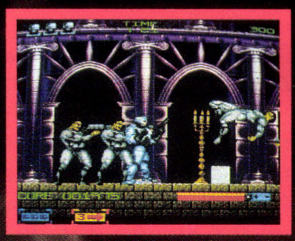


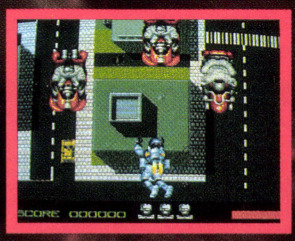
EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE										
CB										
DM										
MD										

As David noted, *Gemfire* departs from Koei's norm. Chris said the mechanics won't make for wide audience appeal, and Andy was disappointed with the graphics.

ROBOCOP 3™







OCP is sending in Rehab Officers to clear the streets of Old Detroit, making way for the construction of Delta City. When ROBOCOP sees helpless families forced out of their homes as the bulldozers move in, he joins the resistance movement to battle the Rehabs!

Armed with a new multi-weapon arm attachment containing a large-bore cannon and a smart bomb, plus a gyropack for airborne assault capability, ROBOCOP faces a batallion of ED-209's, tanks, heavy artillery and a new adversary, OTOMO. The odds seem impossible, but remember—you're ROBOCOP!

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The name of the game

ocean®

CIRCLE #125 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing

VIRGIN

For the Sega Genesis ($59.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10

Ali is back! And this time, once you fire up Virgin Software's new *Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing* for the Sega Genesis, he's under your control. Now you can experience all the excitement of championship boxing: the scream of the crowds, the dazzle of flashbulbs, the thrill of a physical challenge well met.

Before you step into the ring, you can set up the game's options, including the number of players (one or two), the number of rounds, the length of a round, exhibition or tournament mode, music on or off and more. After setting the options, you can select either the arcade or simulation version of the game. In the arcade version, the controls are easy to handle, but you have only a few moves at your disposal. In the simulation mode, the controls are complex, but you have many types of punches from which you can choose. The available moves include the following: sway left, sway right, jab to head, hook to body, duck and uppercut.

Finally, before the fists start swinging, each player must choose his boxer from the ten available bashers. Boxers include Carlos Espinoza, Eddie Montague, Kim Lee, Marvin Cooper and, of course, Muhammad Ali. Each boxer has his own strengths and weaknesses, so you'll have much to learn before you manage to become the heavyweight champion.

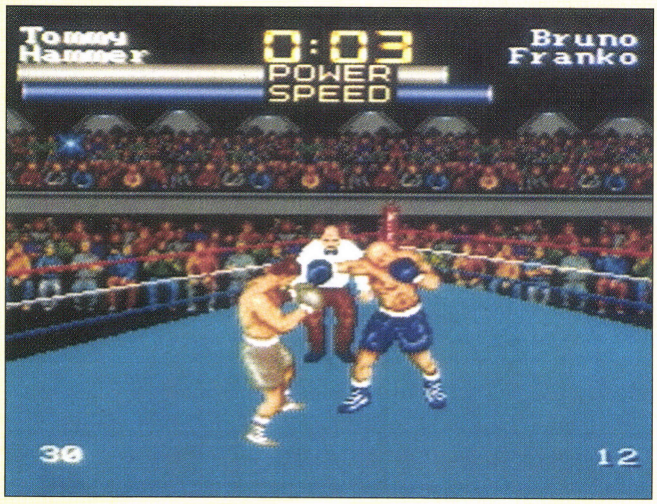
After choosing boxers, it's into the ring, where you and your opponent duke it out for the title. Realistic animation along with digitized sounds transport you from your gaming room into the heat of the ring. The boxers jab and grunt as they maneuver, doing their utmost to cream their rival. Strength and health lines at the top of the screen mark your progress as you bash your opponent senseless. If you can make it to the end of the round, the bell rings, the boxers return to their corners and statistics for that round are shown on the screen.

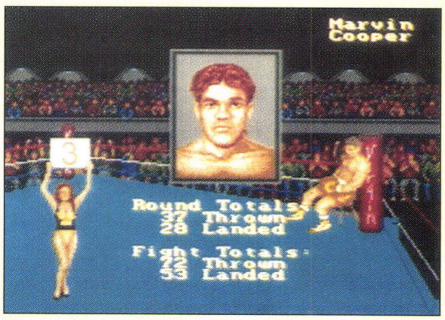
But the respite doesn't last long. Soon you'll be back on your feet swinging, and if you can't knock your opponent to the canvas, he'll be happy to rearrange your face. As you land more and more punches, though, your opponent becomes sluggish, making it easier to get past his guard. If you're a skilled control-pad manipulator, it won't be long before you're awarded the knockout.

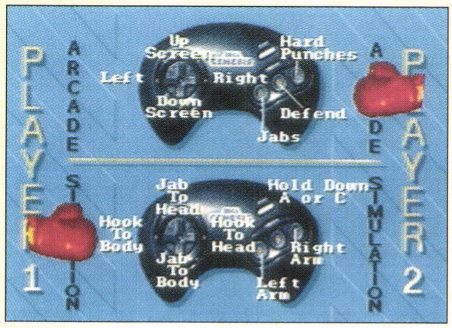
Muhammad Ali may have retired, but you can bring him back into the ring with this realistic boxing simulation. The ability to switch between arcade and simulation modes makes this game perfect for any sports fan, and the large array of moves available in the simulation mode make *Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing* about as realistic as possible on a video-game console. If you like hot boxing action, this one is sure to have you seeing stars.

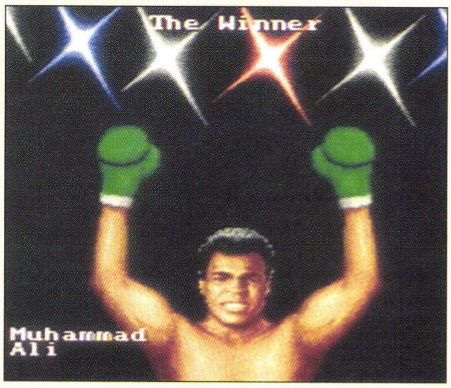
—Clayton Walnum

Virgin Games
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Irvine, CA 92714
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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Though everyone liked *Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing*, Mike and Andy wondered why the action and controls were sluggish.

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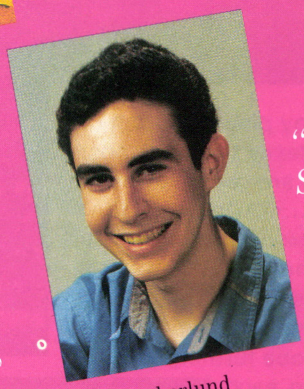
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CIRCLE #113 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Ghost Manor

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16 ($49.99)

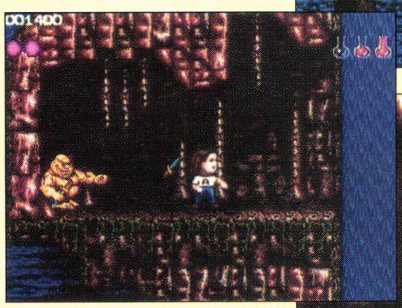
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC			■							
GRAPHICS					■					
PLAYABILITY					■					
OVERALL					■					



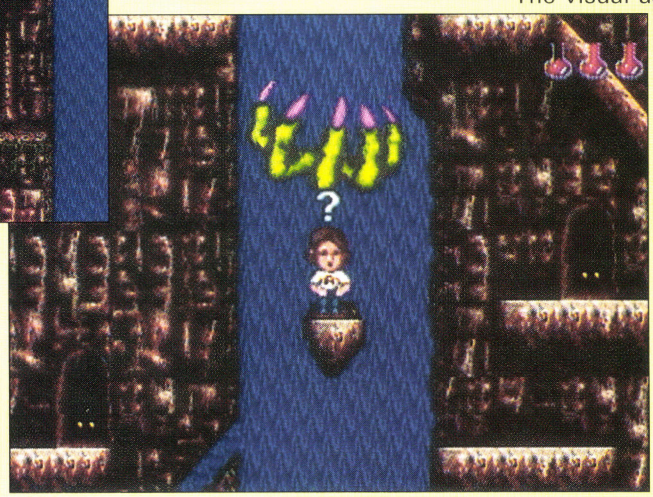
Anoraff is a small, peaceful village full of life and at one with nature...that is, until an unfriendly visitor from another dimension named "Orb Gamut" decides to move into the neighborhood along with hordes of glowing ghosts and monsters. In an attempt to drive this evil away from the area, a group of villagers decides to pay a visit to the good Orb's residence. The few survivors of Orb's hospitality beat a hasty retreat back to the village in despair.

You are Arthur, sole possessor of the "ghostly shot power" that can enable you to defeat Orb and return peace to the village. Your mission begins....





Ghost Manor is a multidirectional scrolling adventure/action game where strategy plays as much of a part as quick reflexes through most of the game. There are seven levels to explore...maybe...could be just five...maybe. I personally explored five levels, but the documentation speaks of five levels in one area and of seven in two other areas, and I didn't have the time to probe further, so....



Your objective in each of the levels is very straightforward. There exists a key, either hidden within a part of the level or carried by one of its inhabitants, that is required to reach the next level. This is where the strategy comes in, as you must carefully ration your shots and health as you try to locate this key as quickly as possible.



The action isn't truly linear, as there are several one-way passages that will throw you back to a previous level, where you must completely conquer the level all over again. This actually isn't so bad sometimes, as you can use this to your advantage by grabbing 1-ups and other power-ups all over again.

Upon clearing the five/seven levels, you will proceed to the climactic battle with old Orby himself. Here, your "ghostly shot power" isn't squat against his evil might, so you must take control of the mighty "Skull Smasher" (a "flying piece of ectoplasmic machinery," no less!) and knock him back to his own dimension.

By far, the main challenge of *Ghost Manor* comes from the "natural" obstacles through most of the game. Once you play through a level a few times, it's easy to find the quickest/easiest way to retrieve the key, but there is still the challenge of navigating the landscapes. The monsters really don't pose much of a problem for the most part, as many of them may be avoided.

The visual aspects are average—the monsters are typical monsters, the backgrounds are okay and the animation is passable. Nothing extraordinary about the sound effects either, just one background tune (that can be turned off, thank goodness) and perhaps four or five sound effects make up the majority of the game as I saw it. The initial challenge is such that the game would hold some interest through to the end the first time, but otherwise quickly fades away.

—Brent Walker

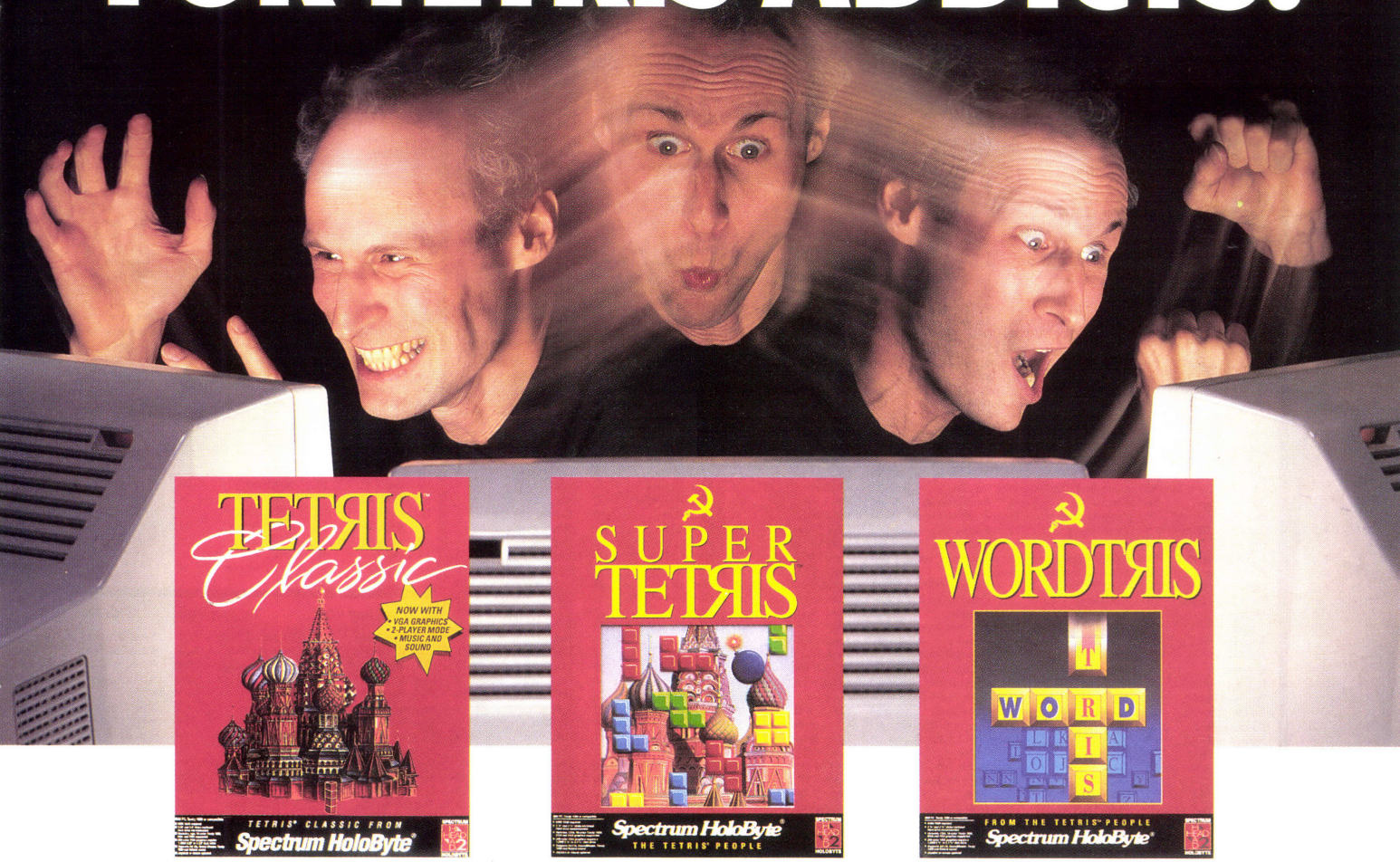
Turbo Technologies Inc.
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(310) 641-4622

EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE						■				
CB					■					
DM					■					
MD					■					

Andy liked the odd-shaped character, which reminded him of *J.J. & Jeff*, but all agreed that *Ghost Manor* was nothing spectacular and had bad play mechanics.

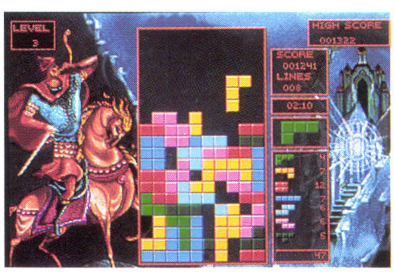
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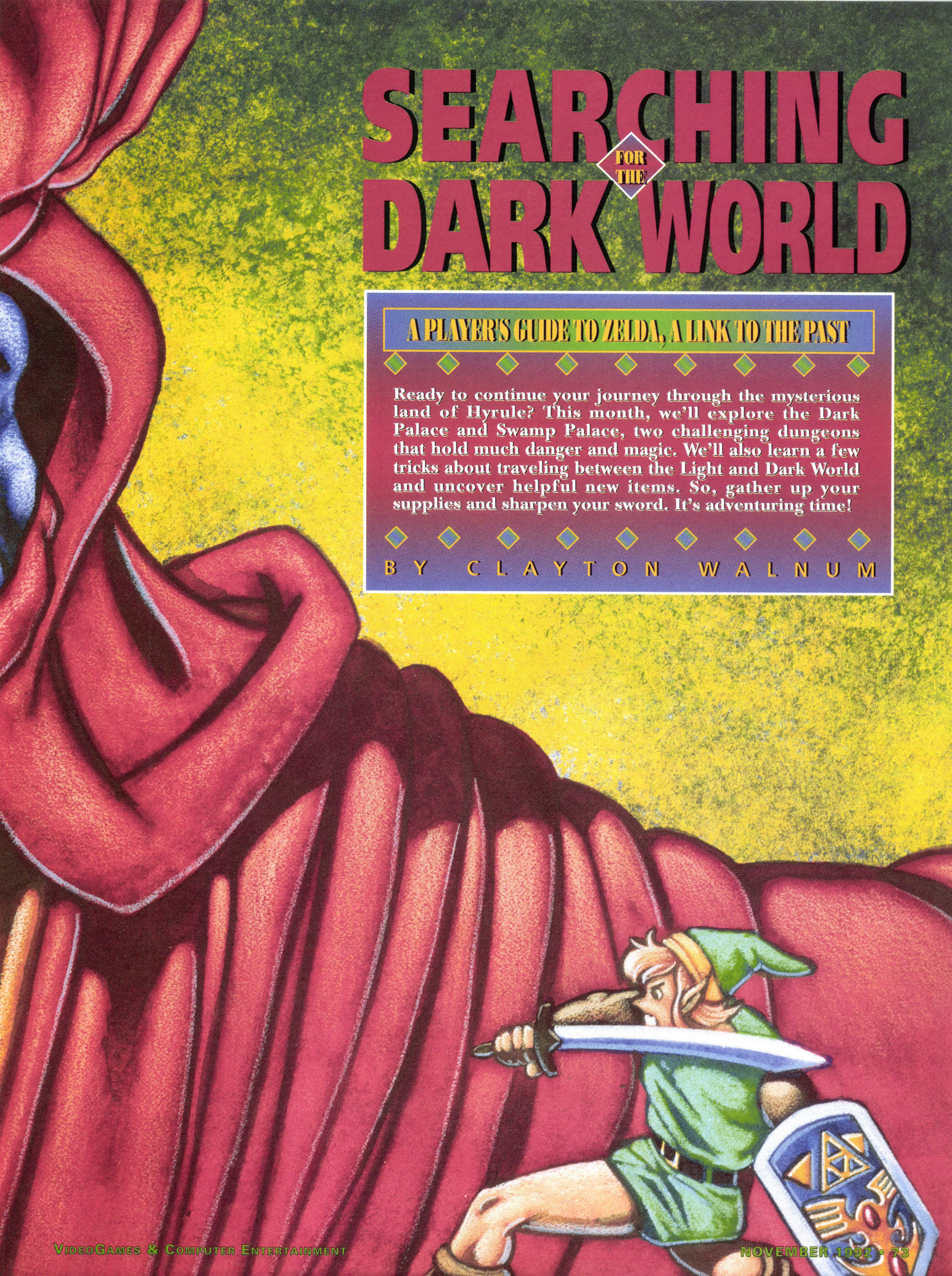
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SEARCHING FOR THE DARK WORLD

A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO ZELDA, A LINK TO THE PAST

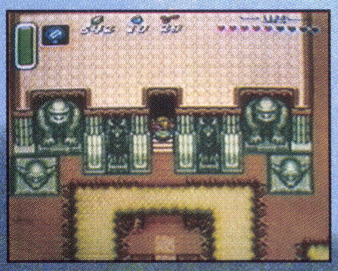
Ready to continue your journey through the mysterious land of Hyrule? This month, we'll explore the Dark Palace and Swamp Palace, two challenging dungeons that hold much danger and magic. We'll also learn a few tricks about traveling between the Light and Dark World and uncover helpful new items. So, gather up your supplies and sharpen your sword. It's adventuring time!

BY CLAYTON WALNUM





Last month, we left off at the end of the Tower of Hera. Your next stop, as you can tell by the crystal on the map, is the Dark Palace.



In the area of the palace, you'll find this small temple.



Inside the temple, you'll find someone to talk to, and...



...if you bomb the rear wall...



In the Dark Palace, you'll find lots of transporters, as well as walls to bomb.



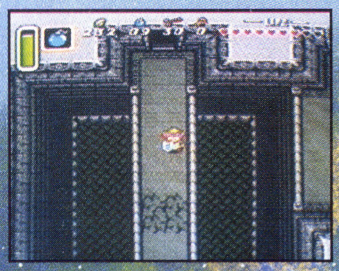
Make sure you bomb only the door on the right. If you bomb on the left, you'll open a hole in the floor.



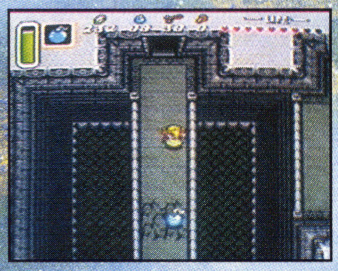
These creatures are hard to hit, because they always move in the opposite direction that you do. Worse, the red one always shoots at you when you line up with him. What to do? Get him almost lined up, shoot your arrow and then quickly move him into the arrow.



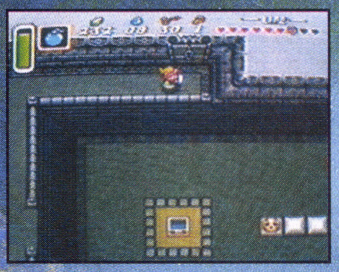
...leads to a fairy pool, where you can charge up for the fight to come.



It looks like this bridge has a dangerous floor, but...



...if you bomb it...



Then, you'll need to find your way back to the ledge, so you can go through the door on the north wall.



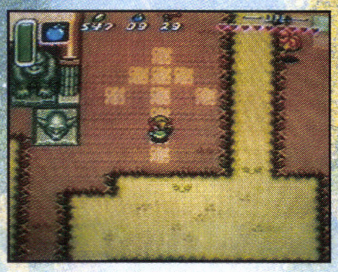
Not far beyond the door, you'll find the big key.



In this strange room, you can leap over yawning chasms, in the direction the arrows point.



...you'll find valuable treasure.



After leaving the temple, you must navigate a small maze. Look everywhere for hidden entrances and paths.



On your way through the maze, you'll find Kiki the monkey, who will accompany you to the Dark Palace's entrance.



At the entrance, Kiki will open the door—if you can afford to pay him.



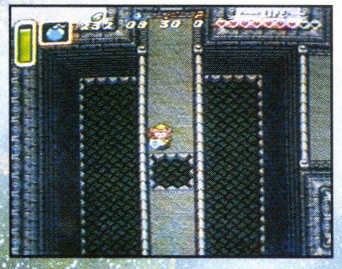
Like any other dungeon, you need to find the map, the compass, the big key and more.



In this room, make sure to bomb both the side walls. The left wall...



...leads to a key, and the right wall...



...you'll create a hole through which...



...you can drop to this ledge.



From the ledge, it's a short jump to this treasure chest, which contains another key.



To get past the first set of obstacles, hit the switch with your boomerang.



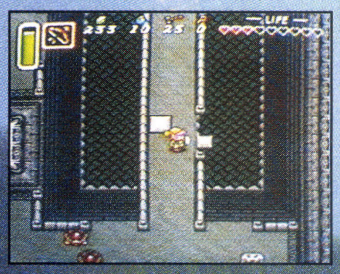
When you find the hidden switch in this room, move the statue over it in order to hold the door open.



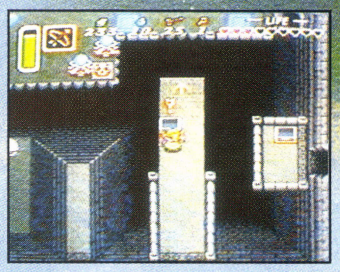
An arrow in this statue's eye will reveal a hidden corridor that...



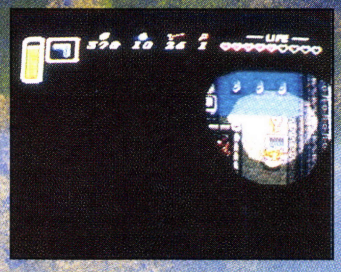
...leads to this darkened room. Can't get past the barrier? Guess you'll have to go back and try to find the magic hammer.



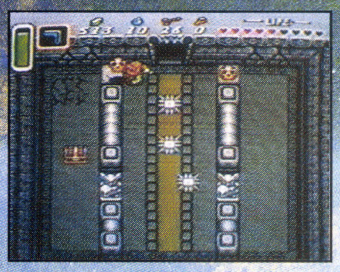
On this bridge, you can push one of the blocks off the edge.



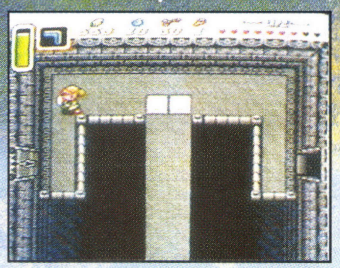
On the other side of the bridge, you'll find another key. You've also found the way past the second barricade. When the first barricade is up, the second one is down. So, reset the first one, then jump past by running in the direction of the arrow at the end of this path.



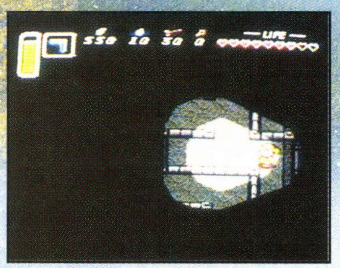
...there's also another key.



Take the side route to get the treasure and bypass the spikes. After getting the treasure, move the statue on the left toward the spike, blocking it so you can get safely past.



Now that you have an extra key, you can explore this side door, which...



...enters into a maze. Getting around is a little tricky, but...



This transporter square is the way to the dungeon's boss.



Use bombs and the hammer to smash this creature's mask.



After getting rid of the mask, use your sword to finish him off.



But before going to the palace, do some more exploring. At this location, if you use the magic mirror...



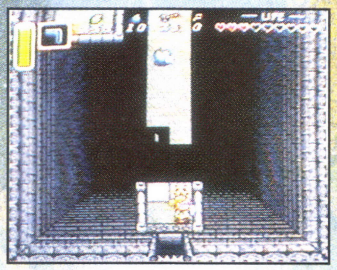
...you'll end up near this monolith that...



...can give you a super new weapon.



You'll then want to head for this northwest door, beyond which...



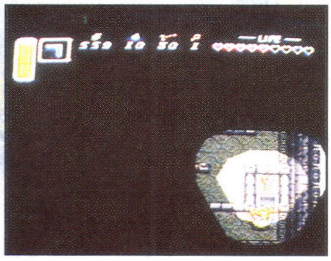
...waits a bridge on the verge of collapse. You must be fast on your feet to get past it before you fall into the abyss.



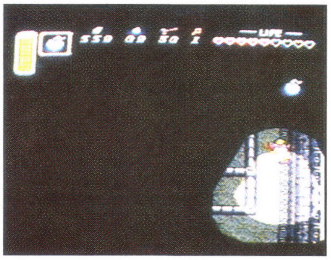
Once you get past, find this room, which contains the compass.



In this darkened room, there's a ton of treasure, and...



...you'll find good stuff, like another key.



You'll also find a wall that needs bombing.



On the other side of the wall is the magic hammer. At last!



With the hammer, you can now kill the pesky turtles and get past the barricade you found before.



When the boss is dead, you'll get the first crystal, and...



...a message from Princess Zelda.



The next stop on your adventure is Swamp Palace, indicated by a "2" on your map.



This ring of flowers hides a secret too. Use the magic mirror while standing in its center...



...and you'll appear in this small clearing, which...



...has a small cave to the north. The cave...



...contains lots of treasure, including another piece of heart.



Another transfer point is hidden beneath the stone in the center of this ring. Now that you have the hammer, you can get in.



Another place you need to find is this waterfall, where you can purchase the flippers. To get there, look for places in the water through which you can walk.



Once you have the flippers, you can swim. These whirlpools will quickly transport you to faraway places.



Need another bottle? First, find this dock near the magic shop. Then...



...go into the water and swim around toward the north and east. Look for...



...this bridge. Under the bridge...



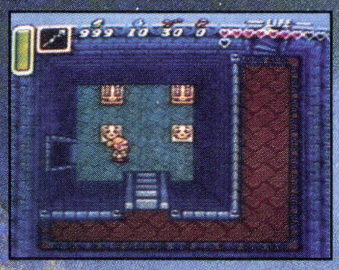
If you can't reach the ladder, you need to exit the palace and use your mirror to get to the Light World. In the Light World version of the palace, there is a lever you can pull to release the floodgates and fill the palace with water. When you go back to the Dark World, you'll then be able to swim to the ladder.



Push a statue onto this switch, and the door will stay open.



Inside Swamp Palace, you'll find levers to control the water. You'll also find the hook shot, which will allow you to get over open spaces.



The switch also drains this room, so you can get at the treasures.



The second waterfall from the right hides a secret entrance.



When you find the boss, first use your hook shot to grab the fireballs, and kill them with your sword.



Swim into the center of this ring of stones and use your magic mirror.



You'll appear on this island, where you can grab a piece of heart.



Use your shovel to dig in the haunted grove, and...



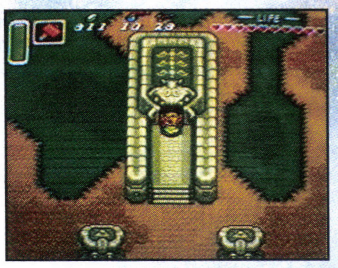
...you'll eventually uncover the flute.



...you'll find this camper, who...



...will give you your third magic bottle.



Here's the entrance to Swamp Palace.



To get at these treasures, you first must drain the water from the room.



Remember this switch? It also controls the door at the east end of the corridor.



When you enter this room from the right-hand door, you can push the switch and empty the room of water, revealing a new door.



When all his protection is gone, this boss will try to drop on you from above. Watch for his shadow and stay out of his way. When he's in the water, attack him with your sword.

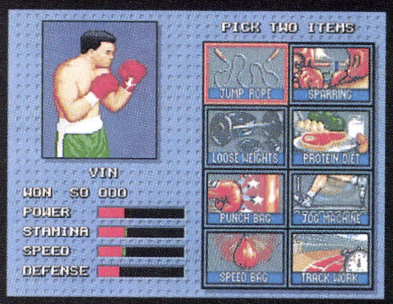


When you kill him, you'll get another heart, as well as...



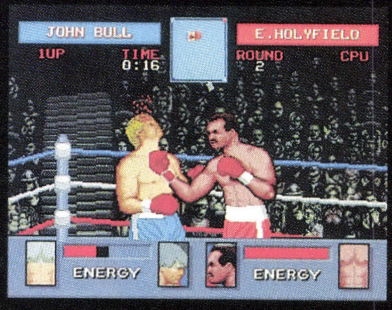
...another crystal. Check your on-screen map for your next destination. Then continue on for more exciting adventures. Zelda awaits!

AND NOW A MESSAGE FROM EVANDER HOLYFIELD.

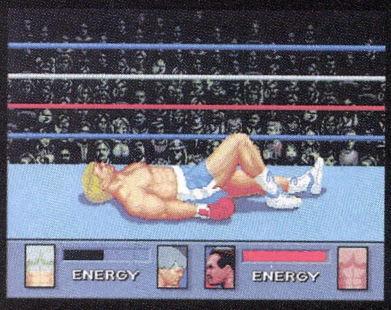


Sweat's gonna fly. And blood's gonna flow. 'Cause this is no two-bit sports simulation. This is Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing™—16-bit Sega™ Genesis™ realism right in your face.

Speed. Stamina. Power. Defense. You design your own boxer. Right down to his haircut. But you gotta be strategic. There are 28 hungry contenders itching to make you kiss canvas. Long before you get a shot at the champ.



You've got 360 degrees of freedom. So jab. Cross. Block. Uppercut and punch. The more you win, the more formidable you become.

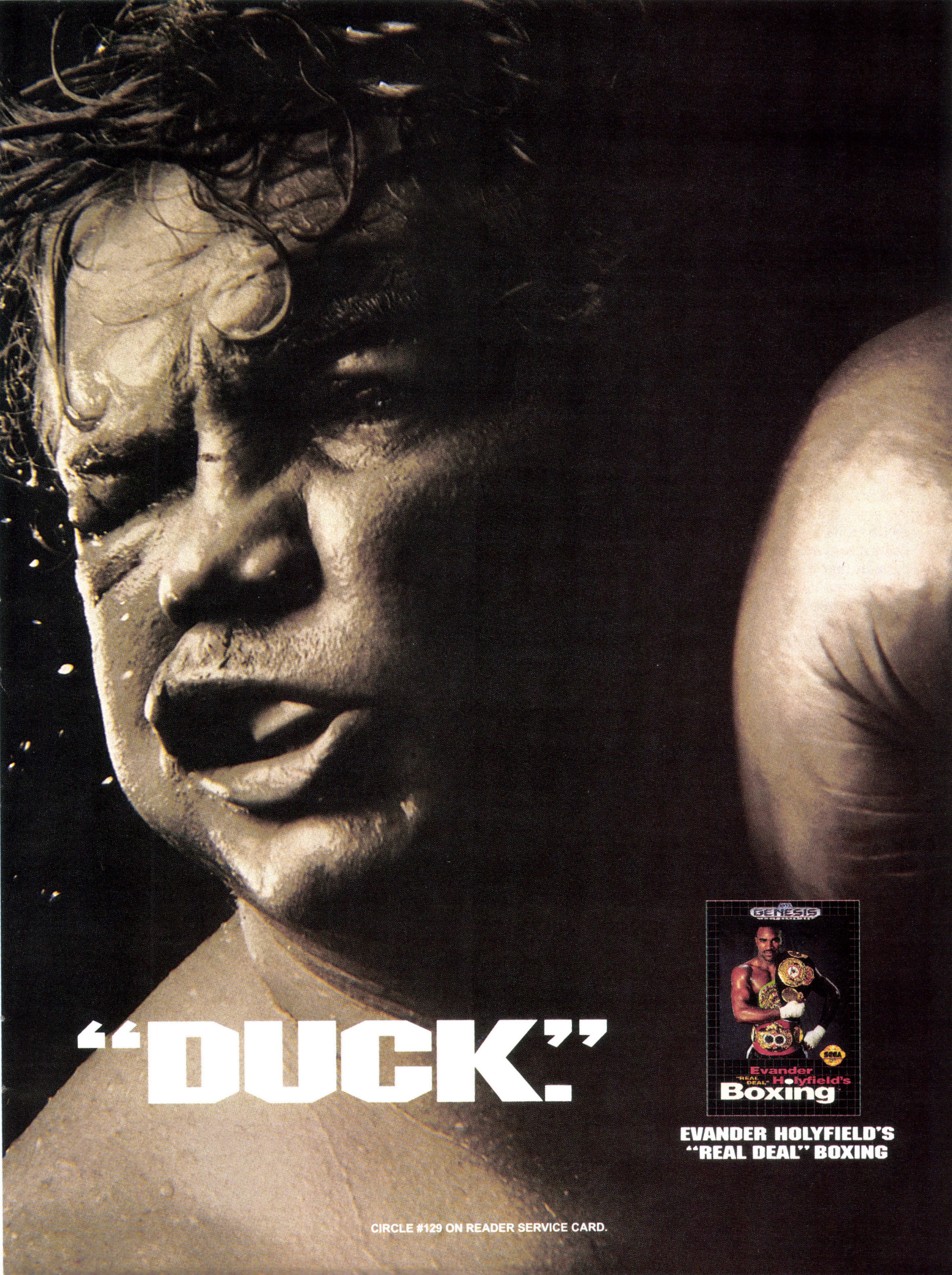


Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing. It's tough. It's bloody. It's The Real Deal. Get the message?

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EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S
"REAL DEAL" BOXING

CIRCLE #129 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



BY DAVID MOSKOWITZ

Cool Pool

CATALINA GAMES

Playing pool is a lot like playing golf—it can be inconvenient. Either one is rich enough to have a table in a fully furnished game room or have to travel to pool halls notorious for a layer of cigarette smoke and stale beer permeating the playing area.

To the casual observer, it's an easy game to simulate electronically. In actuality, pool is a game full of subtleties: the amount of force a ball retains when hit by a cushion or another ball; the spin of the cue ball and the angle from which the cue stick strikes it; and, as pool players know, shot position. Pool is more than walking around the table; all sorts of body contortions above the green felt are needed to ensure sinking a shot.

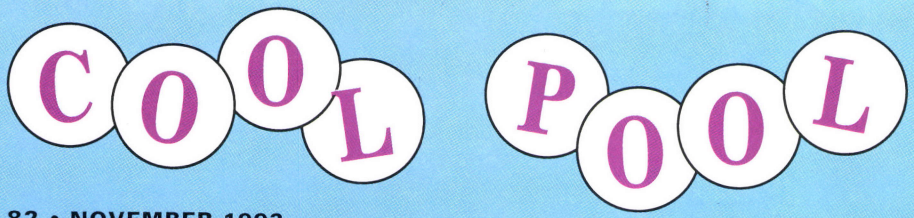
With that in mind, it's easy to see that re-creating accurate video pool is difficult enough—without then having to make the game sufficiently enjoyable to lure *Street Fighter II* junkies to a more peaceable game. However, Catalina Games has overcome all obstacles in creating what people who have been in this business too long call a "sleeper" hit. That's *Cool Pool*.

Players' initial choices include number of players, games available (eight ball, nine ball, straight pool), as well as music. The rock, which has fewer guitars than most Muzak and thankfully no vocals, may not please heavy metal fans, but it's not Lionel Richie either, and it works well as background music. The jazz, which is instrumental by definition, is much closer to what one would expect from a jazz album. The music is noteworthy, not because it's so great, but because it exemplifies the detail that went into this game.

All game play is controlled by a trackball and two buttons. The first action of every shot is positioning the "table." The table rotates a full 360° and tilts so the view ranges from the equivalent of eye level with the balls to mostly overhead. Once the angle is chosen, players secure the view with the "lock" button, after which the cue stick appears. Similarly, the trackball controls the angle of the stick, which is also set by the lock button. The English button may then come into play. If the player selects English, a close-up of the cue ball appears with a floating target, which can be set to the point of impact, giving the cue ball the amount of spin needed to keep trick shots from turning into scratches (sinking the cue ball). Finally, a quick roll of the trackball in any direction begins the action, with the force behind the cue stick proportional to the speed of the trackball.

Though limited in number, the available games are faithful to actual pool. In eight or nine ball, for example, players win the game if the eight or nine, respectively, is sunk on the break. It would have been nice to see more games, but *Cool Pool* is more about individual shots than it is overall game performance. Game length, in fact, is not controlled by the number of sunk balls but by the number of misses, with scratches counting as an extra miss. A good run will earn players extra misses, while empty pockets on the screen will mean the same in real life for anyone who wishes a long, continuous game.

Each shot is allotted about 30 seconds, and generally this is more than adequate time. The speed at which the table and cue move will astound anyone who has dealt with overhyped virtual reality on any video or computer game. This is another aspect that makes *Cool Pool* so special: It cannot be adequately translated to computer or cartridge format given current industry and hardware standards. Any game that has to be played in an arcade had best be worth the trip, and, luckily, *Cool Pool* is worth it—especially since players don't have to worry about getting blue chalk all over their clothes.



Total Knowledge: The Complete Guide to Total Carnage

General Akhboob must be stopped. While some may feel that kidnapping electronic journalists is of debatable villainy, he has converted a baby milk factory into a nuclear powered mutant generator. To stop him, it will take no one less than Captain Carnage and Major Mayhem, the only two soldiers capable of surviving the *Total Carnage*. Using the same two joystick controls in the classic hyperkinetic *Robotron 2084*—one for movement, the other for firing direction, in addition to a special smart bomb/air strike button—*Total Carnage* will drench the two warriors in the gory remains of thousands of General Akhboob's mutants. Unfortunately, much of the destruction will be their own, but thanks to the designers and play testers at Williams, as well as *Total Carnage*'s designer, Mark Turmell, VG&CE is able to provide the techniques essential for keeping your own carcass from being included in the body count.

Total Carnage is divided into three missions, with bosses at the end of missions one and three, and a special electrocution scene at the end of the second mission. At the beginning of each mission, touch the crumpled maps to see a map of the upcoming battlefield.



At the end of each mission, *Total Carnage* calculates and displays all relative bonus points and statistics.





In addition to the obvious goals—free the hostages while killing everything else—players should constantly search for keys that will allow them into the Pleasure Dome to join veterans of Turmell's previous game, *Smash TV*.

KNOW YOURSELF

The top number is your current number of bombs. The one below that is your score. On the following line (left to right) is the number of men remaining, and the final number is a tally of how many hostages you have rescued. *Total Carnage* grants four men for the first quarter and three more for every additional 25¢.



KNOW YOUR FOE

GRUNTS: Although armed with guns, they'd rather bash your face in with their rifle butts than shoot you.



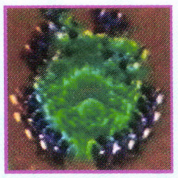


FLAMING GRUNTS: No more dangerous than the regular kind, but a lot more disturbing.

MR. BUTANE: Much tougher than the other foes, they will require multiple hits from most weapons to destroy. If left untouched, however, they will use their flamethrowers, so it's often smart to shoot as many as possible, rather than trying to ensure individual kills.



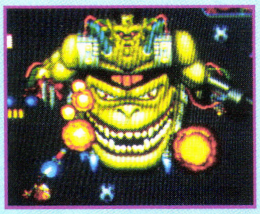
DEMONS: Ax-wielding mutants born of radioactive goo, the best way to destroy them is to prevent their creation. Stand in the middle of the large circles of green ooze and, when a circle of green gobs shoots out from the center, drop two bombs. Wait there until the bombs detonate, killing the demons and awarding an extra 2,500 points.

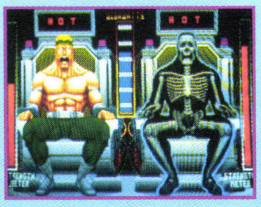


FIENDS: Purple or green, these slime-spitters enter the battle bouncing in and out of weapon range, so if you're using a limited-ammo weapon, wait a second before firing on them.



ORCUS, THE MOTHER OF BOSS MONSTERS: With enough time and quarters, anyone can defeat Orcus, but those who want to finish it off fast should follow these steps: 1) shoot off the guns attached to its arms; 2) destroy the bloody stumps that remain; 3) grab the bazooka and shoot out its eyes; 4) destroy the small head; and 5) finish off the remnants.





THE ELECTRIC CHAIR: At the end of the second mission, players are automatically captured and strapped into one of Akhboob's favorite toys. Fast button-pressing is the only way to survive.

GENERAL AKHBOOB: He controls several, almost identical, bosses that get uglier as players finish them off. Anyone who made it through Orcus shouldn't have too much trouble.



AKHBOOB'S GENERALS: After the final bosses are destroyed, Akhboob's flunkies try to escape, and he's disguised as one of them! Running into them is the only way to stop them, and, if even one escapes, Akhboob will have won, and the game will proclaim, "You Suck."



STATIONARY LAND MINES: Providing the game's m ost graphic death by hurling your shredded body at the player, they should be avoided or destroyed with bombs. Be especially careful when picking up large quantities of gems—many have this very deadly surprise at the bottom of the pile.

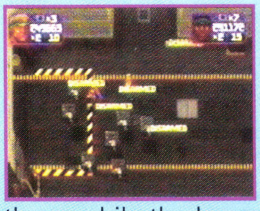


MOVING MINES: Do we have to explain everything?

BARRELS: Full of muck and ready to explode, the secret trick to destroying them safely is to walk in the tight space between the barrels and the walls.



NUCLEAR DEVICES: Dropped from above, these atomic crates bounce three times before resting on the ground—that is, resting until detonation. The smaller ones can be disarmed by running into them, while the larger ones (noted by their visible countdown from 99) cannot be disarmed and provide a somewhat less-than-subtle incentive to leave the warp zone.



KNOW YOUR FRIENDS

WARP SPOTS: Step on these to be transported to special levels containing dog tags, other bonus items and another set of foes. After defeating the enemy, players return to the normal playfield. These warp levels do contain extra-man icons, but they are just as deadly as the game's normal stages. Those who don't care about the Pleasure Dome and simply want to finish the game would be best off avoiding these levels.

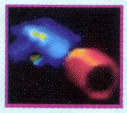


FLAMETHROWERS: The weapon of choice. It's a good idea to ease up on firing whenever possible, because they contain limited charge. Most of them are randomly placed, but a few extra-long-lasting flamethrowers are hidden under trees and behind walls.



SCATTER GUNS: These have roughly the strength of a machine gun, but fire in a widespread arc. They're more useful on troops than equipment.





RAPID-FIRE BLUE SPHERES: Not especially effective against large waves of foot soldiers, these work wonderfully on trucks, tanks and jeeps.

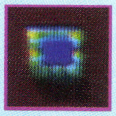
BAZOOKAS: These are generally inferior to the other power-ups, except when fighting Orcus.





PERSONAL SATELLITE: Causes a metal globe to circle around the player, taking out adjacent threats.

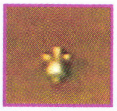
BOMBS: These are most useful when trying to destroy trucks, jeeps, tanks, planes and boss monsters. Each will go off three seconds after placement, so they should be placed in front of moving vehicles. Placing a bomb also gives you two seconds of invulnerability, so don't be afraid to run under the boss to place additional bombs—after you've dropped the first. Warning: Each character can only carry nine bombs! Consistently trying to hog more will cause them to detonate—without providing the two seconds of invulnerability.



BIG BOMBS: Immediately after picking one of these up, you will automatically start dropping smaller bombs behind you. The best use for these is to travel in circles around the screen. This will kill any incoming hordes and take out as many barrels and crates as possible.

SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES: In some segments, mainly the airport, pressing the bomb button when close enough to a large target will summon these. Don't worry about calling too many of them; the only disadvantage could be obscured vision from all of the explosions.

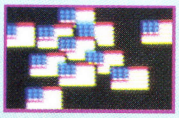




WARHEADS: When walked on, these will destroy all enemies on the screen. However, they don't always work, so plan an escape route in case you find a dud.



KEYS: Depending on the arcade operator, players need a minimum of 200 keys to get into the Pleasure Dome at the end of the game. Keys are most abundant in the warp zones and behind walls and objects rendering them invisible to players. To find them, move the characters along the walls and objects in a way that they keep out of sight. In the third mission, players with 140 keys can discover a secret nuclear reactor zone behind the first reactor.



JEWELS AND AMERICAN FLAGS: They're worth points, but nothing else.



DOG TAGS: Each is worth an extra man.

SNEAKERS: Make player run faster. Listen for Curly.



REPORTERS: They're loud, and most of them are dressed like tourists, but saving them from exploding barrels of goo is still worth a few points.

KNOW YOUR PASSWORDS

At the beginning of the game, players may step onto a special warp disk and enter a password to transport them to different locations in the game. The following are the passwords in chronological order. Keep in mind that it should take approximately one hour to play *Total Carnage* from start to finish. Also keep in mind that the later you start in the game, the fewer keys that will be available.

GOOB—First Desert Lock Down, only about two minutes into the game.

ZULU—About halfway through the first stage (ten minutes) and right before the first time play is interrupted for General Akhboob's ranting.



ORCS—Immediately before Orcus, the final foe before the end of the first stage.

ROAD—The beginning of the second stage.

LIPS—About halfway through the second stage.

LICK—Toward the end of the second stage, at the airport immediately after the moving mines.

SHOK—This takes players to the electrocution scene and then returns them to the beginning of the game.

FIRE—Battle against the flaming grunts immediately before the electrocution.

FOOD—Beginning of the third mission, the Road toward the Baby Milk factory.

EATS—Immediately before intermission with the fiend eating a soldier in front of the Baby Milk factory. (See Fiends illustration.)

TOID—At the front gates of the Baby Milk factory (about two minutes before BOOF).

BOOF—Inside the factory, approximately two minutes after TOID, roughly three-quarters of the way through the game.

MARK—Start of basement in the Baby Milk factory. This is the farthest any password will take the player while still providing combat.

DOME—Ending No. 1. Akhboob has been defeated but not captured. Players will be told "You Suck."

WORM—Ending No. 2. Akhboob captured.

AZAZ—Inside the Pleasure Dome.





WARNING:

While the final three codes provide enjoyable viewing, players have nothing to fight and the game ends after the animated scenes.

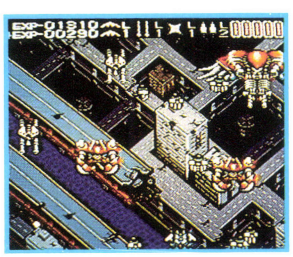
Special thanks to C.A. Robinson and Company of Los Angeles for its help in preparing this month's *Destination Arcadia*.

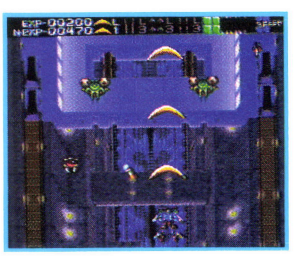
IN FOR A SHOCK?



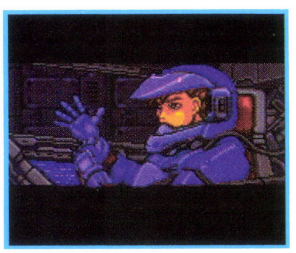
THEN STEP INTO **DYNAMOR,** YOUR ALIEN-CRAFTED SUIT OF DYNAMIC ARMOR. BUT MOVE QUICKLY, YOUR METAL HEAD COMPETITION IS ABOUT TO SMACK YOUR JAW WITH A NASTY LITTLE LASER BOLT. AND THAT'S JUST THE WARMUP. WHEN THE ACTION REALLY HEATS UP, THE MECHANIZED SHOCKTROOPERS FROM **IMPERIUM** WILL BE TRYING TO TURN THAT **DYNAMOR** OF YOURS INTO NOTHING MORE THAN A COOKIE SHEET.

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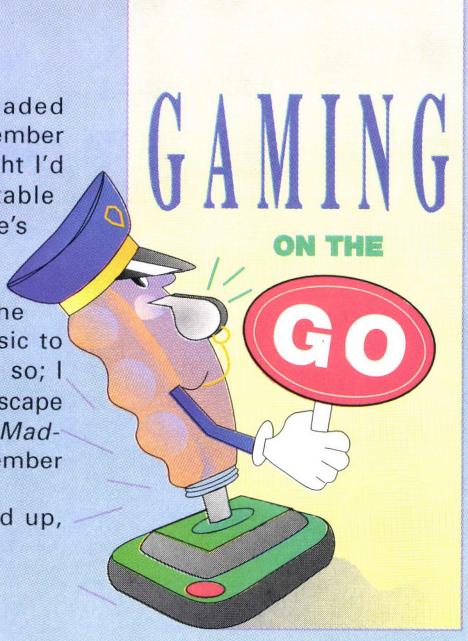
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GAMING ON THE GO



BY
CHRIS BIENIEK

Nobody caught the boneheaded mistake I made in the September issue of VG&CE, so I thought I'd 'fess up before this month's portable prose gets under way. In that issue's *Gaming on the Go* column, I implied that Tengen's Game Gear version of *Marble Madness* was the first translation of the arcade classic to appear on the portable scene. Not so; I had completely forgotten that Mindscape released a fine version of *Marble Madness* for the Game Boy back in November of '91. Apologies all around.

Hope your batteries are charged up, 'cause here we go....

Dig Dug

NAMCO

For the Nintendo Game Boy ($28.50)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10

If you're a veteran arcade gamer who goes gonzo for coin-op classics like *Missile Command*, *Q*bert* and *Centipede*, you should run out and buy yourself a Game Boy right now. The last few months have seen an explosion of Game Boy titles based on the best of the quarter-eaters from a decade ago, and most of them—including the three titles mentioned above—have been highly entertaining, extremely playable blasts from the past. *Dig Dug* is the latest "retro" game to hit the green screen, and it's another great example of the instantly accessible appeal of the video games of the early '80s.

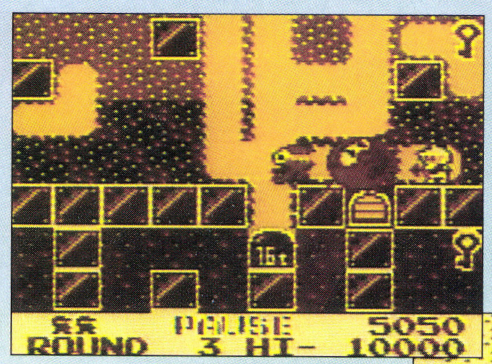
In these pages, we've talked a lot about the importance of keeping such translations faithful to the originals—for the sake of nostalgia—and the seemingly contradictory need to update them for the jaded gamer of the '90s. In converting its own *Dig Dug* for the Game Boy, Namco is keeping both audiences happy by including two different versions of the game in the same cartridge.

The first is a direct carbon copy of the coin-op. For the uninitiated, it's an entertaining maze game in which the title character burrows through the ground and blows up his enemies in the most literal sense—by pumping them full of air until they burst! Everything from the character animation to the music and sound effects is faithfully duplicated from the original, the only differences being a scrolling screen and buttons that "pump" automatically without repeated pressings.

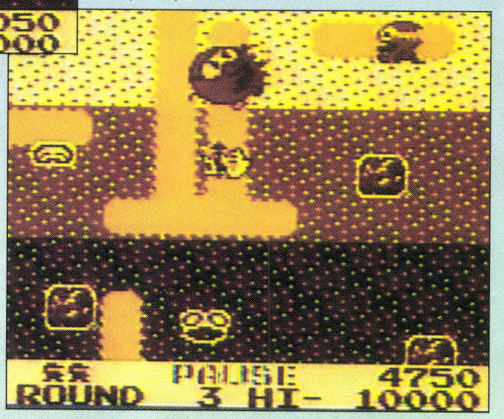
Upon this solid foundation, an updated version of the game has been built. Called *New Dig Dug*, it enhances the engaging game play and characters of the original with a new musical score, new obstacles and the need to find three keys before you can gain access to each screen's exit door. The new game also offers unlimited continues.

Though *New Dig Dug* suffers from a bit of slowdown in its busier stages, the two games make a great package together, offering a lot of entertainment for your gaming dollar.

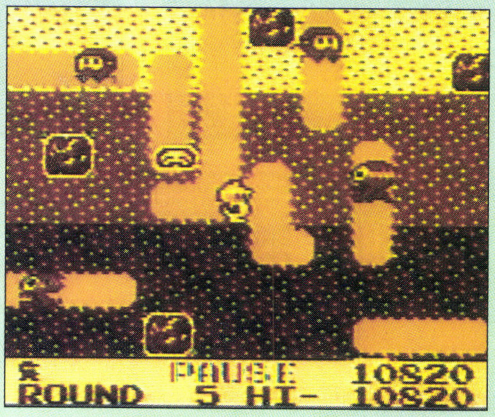
Namco Hometek Inc.
3255-1 Scott Blvd., Suite 102
Santa Clara, CA 95054-3013
(408) 496-6371



The classic *Dig Dug* and a brand new sequel team up in a single Game Boy cartridge.







NFL Football

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx ($39.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10

Like *Hockey*, Lynx fans have been waiting a long time for *NFL Football* to show up, and, also like *Hockey*, it has proven to be well worth the wait. This one has real NFL teams and colors, 25 distinctly different plays to choose from on offense and defense, a two-player ComLynx mode and a "zoom" feature that shows off the hardware's scaling abilities to dramatic effect.

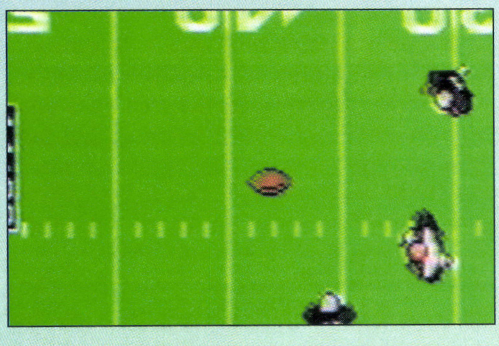
In case you can't tell from looking at the accompanying screen shots, *NFL Football* requires that the Lynx unit be held sideways (like *Gauntlet*, *Klax* and parts of *Hockey*). Fortunately for those who dislike such a feature, it is possible to play the game while holding the Lynx the regular way; this just makes it tougher to read the play selection screen.

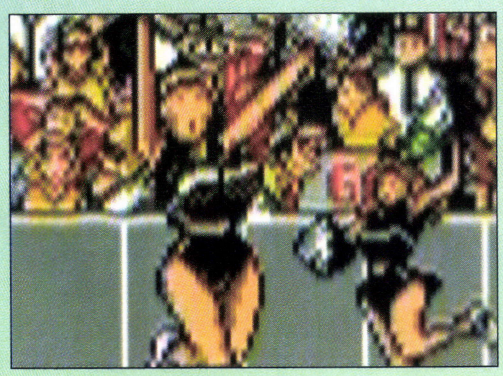
The overhead view works beautifully. Not only does it make it easy to track the movements of your players, but it also gives the "zoom" feature maximum impact. The **OPTION** keys give you this ability to choose between a Goodyear Blimp view and a just-above-the-helmet close-up, not to mention all points in between.

Though the sound in general is not all that great—there's very little music and the crowd noises sound like a flushing toilet—the digitized voices are pretty good.



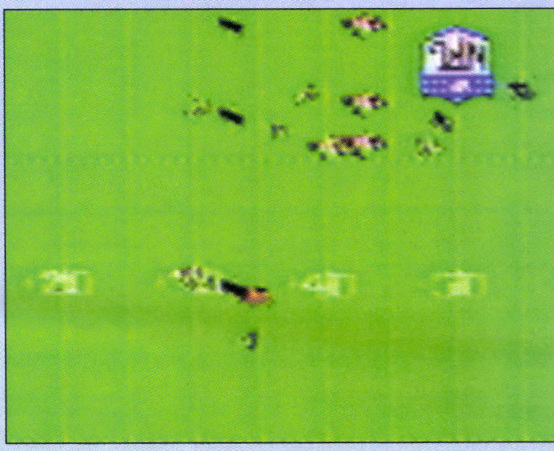








***NFL Football* shows off the Lynx hardware with great animation and scaling effects.**



Graphics are very well-drawn, with the official team logos and scoreboard animations looking exceptionally sharp.

As in any sports simulation, "the play's the thing," and, in *NFL Football*, it's the icing on the cake. The passing game is quick and intuitive, and the running game is perhaps more valid than in most football video games. Astoundingly, the computer-controlled players on your team are actually smart enough to block for the ball carrier!

Atari's *NFL Football* delivers excitement without exaggerating reality, and depicts realism without bogging down the player in a jungle of options. What more could you ask of a sports video game?

Atari Entertainment
500 Watersedge Drive, Suite 310
Lombard, IL 60148
(708) 629-6500

Prince of Persia

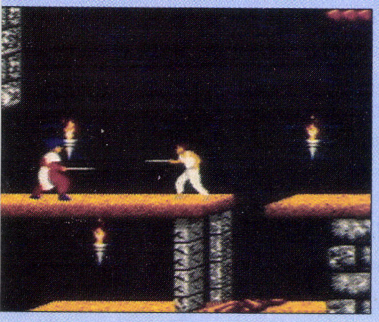
TENGEN

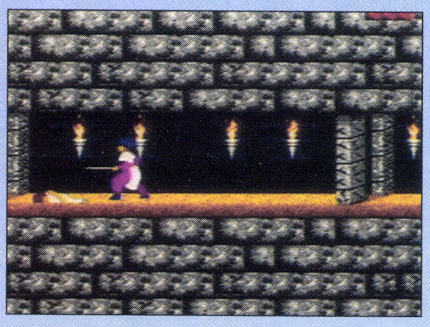
For the Sega Game Gear ($34.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10

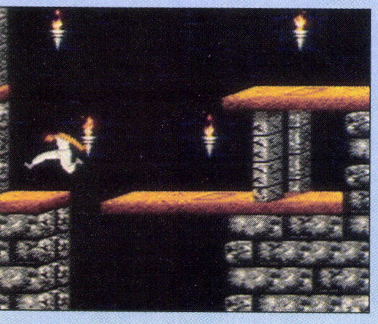
Hey, can you believe that a Game Gear title has finally made the cover of VG&CE? Seriously, unless you've skipped through the *Video-Game Reviews* section to jump right into *Gaming on the Go*, you've probably realized that our cover was meant to focus attention on Mike Davila's feature review of *Prince of Persia* for the SNES and TG-16. But Tengen couldn't have picked a better time to send us a review copy of the Game Gear version of this run-and-jump classic.

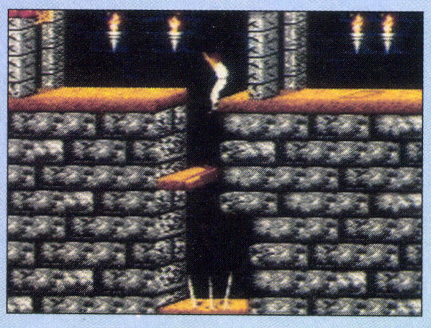
Licensed from Domark, the European publisher of the Master System version of the game, *Prince of Persia* lights up the Game Gear with the same smooth character animation and eerie torch-lit settings

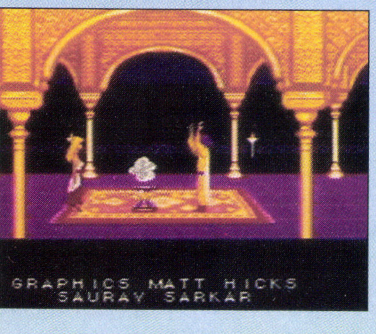




Prince of Persia on the Game Gear: the adventure continues.







that fueled all other previous versions of the game. As the natural successor to creator Jordan Mechner's *Karateka* beat-'em-up, *Prince of Persia* is a proven winner that brings a sense of history to the color portable scene.

If the game has a noticeable flaw, it's one that's common to all existing translations of the game: Some players feel that the control pad simply has too many functions assigned to it, which often gives the illusion of a lack of responsiveness. The rainbow-colored blurring of the tiny text in the game's credits and introductory screens— while bothersome—does not interfere with game play, since there is no text on the screen during the main body of the game's action.

If you don't mind squinting to read the titles, it's smooth sailing from that point on. Most of the game's screens are instantly recognizable to anyone who has played previously existing versions of *Prince of Persia*—"If it ain't broke, don't fix it" is a longstanding rule of video-game design that certainly applies here.

Tengen has struck gold in its continuing efforts to bring Master System hits from Europe to Game Gear screens in the U.S., and I applaud its strong support of Sega's portable game system. Keep 'em coming!

Tengen Inc.
675 Sycamore Drive
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 473-9400

StarHawk

ACCOLADE

For the Nintendo Game Boy ($27.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC						■				
GRAPHICS								■		
PLAYABILITY						■				
OVERALL							■			

Developed by NMS Software for Accolade, *StarHawk* is a scrolling shoot-'em-up in the tradition of *R-Type* and *Gradius*. You know the routine: Maneuver your spaceship around the obstacles and use your onboard laser weapons to destroy everything in your path

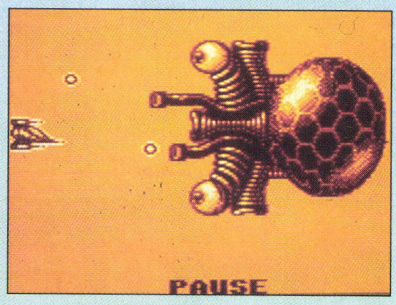
It's not easy to do this type of game on the Game Boy. The system's LCD screen tends to reduce background details to a blur in a scrolling game like this one, so NMS has come up with a few tricks to try to get around the problem. First, the game moves at a relatively slow pace, which helps the display to keep up with the details. Secondly, most of the moving objects that appear in the game are surrounded by a thin, white outline, which makes it easier to distinguish your ship and your enemies from the scenery.

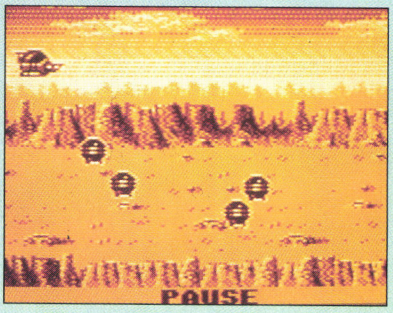
These ideas work pretty well, and they have given *StarHawk* the freedom to be a little more ambitious than most Game Boy shooters tend to be. On the plus side, that means multiplane background scrolling and a good variety of obstacles and targets. On the negative side, though, *StarHawk* is a very tough game, one that requires a lot of pattern memorization and a speedy trigger finger. Fortunately, there's a password system that allows you to save a game in progress.

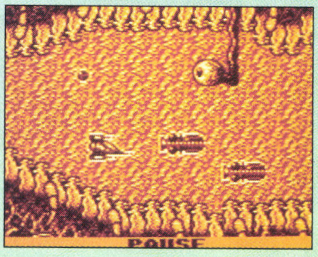
It's also nice to be able to fly different types of vehicles during the course of *StarHawk*. I didn't like the fact that each ship is equipped with a weapon that fires from below its center on the vertical plane, which makes it more difficult to pick off targets that are closer to the top of the screen. Still, this is a pretty minor complaint in light of the game's stronger points—namely, the graphics. Certain levels deliver a very convincing 3-D effect, not unlike the scrolling scenery in *Shadow of the Beast*.

Though it plays a little too slowly to satisfy the most maniacal shooter fans, *StarHawk* stands out because it pushes the limitations of the Game Boy hardware, and that's always a good sign for the portable gamer.

Accolade Inc.
5300 Stevens Creek Blvd.
San Jose, CA 95129
(408) 985-1700







Accolade's *StarHawk*, an ambitious shooter for the Game Boy.

Switchblade II

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx ($39.99)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC					5					
GRAPHICS					5					
PLAYABILITY					5					
OVERALL					5					

As the sword-swinging young hero named Hiro, last of the Blade Knights, you have been entrusted with the fate of the Cyberworld as it falls under the shadow of the evil dude Havoc. To save your people, you'll have to run and jump through different colored backgrounds, fight evil creatures and pick up power-ups.

Now, go and grab yourself a cold glass of water, because *Switchblade II* is as dry as its premise makes it sound. Not that the game is bad—it's just so unbearably average that you could probably quiz any fifth-grader and get some good suggestions about how to change the game to make it stand out from the crowd of *Ninja Gaiden/Rolling Thunder/Shinobi* clones.

Among its forgettable features are bland scenery, lack of background music, a tiresome "find money and shop for weapons" subplot, sound effects that seem for all the world as if they've been recycled from *Crystal Mines II* and stiff animation. The latter is particularly inexplicable, as it robs the main character of the shred of charisma generated by his pensive portrait on the game's title screen.

If you could see the way Hiro jumps, you'd understand: Instead of flexing his knees to spring up, he just sort of crosses one leg with the other and zips into the air as if he's been yanked skyward by the recoil of an invisible bungee cord. Then there's the dubious information that's available for purchase in the weapons shops. An example: "Jump high to avoid danger." Hey, I paid ten credits for this?! I could have picked up a plasma gun!

Seriously, the most perplexing aspect of *Switchblade II* is the fact that it has been licensed from the U.K.'s Gremlin Graphics, who apparently had some success with Atari ST and Amiga versions of the game. Couldn't Atari have put that



***Switchblade II* for the Lynx: conversion by Gremlin Graphics.**

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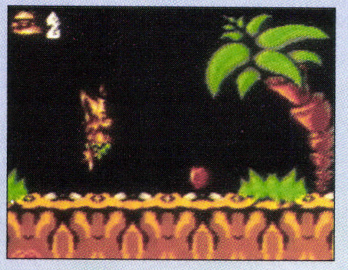
Chuck Rock

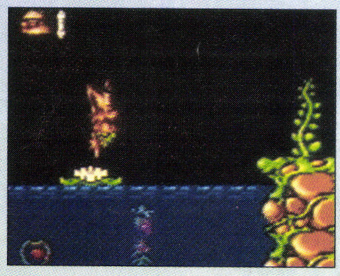
SEGA

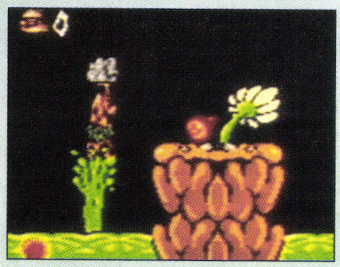
For the Sega Game Gear ($29.99)

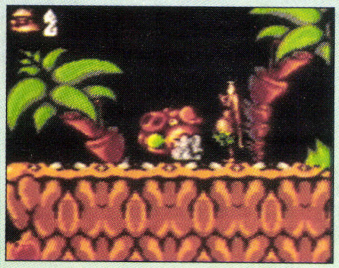
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10

Like a low-key version of the Genesis hit, the comical caveman Chuck Rock has stepped into the Game Gear with his protruding jawbone and potbelly intact. In this smoothly paced run-and-jump adventure, Chuck must climb mountains, battle dinosaurs and swim oceans in order to rescue his wife, Ophelia, from the clutches of the dastardly Gary Critter.





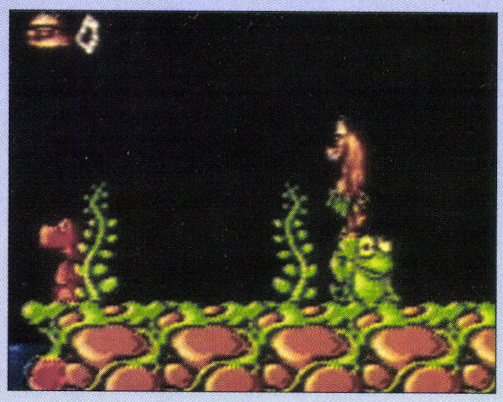




One of the most interesting features of the game—aside from the title character's ability to pick up rocks and chuck them across the screen—is Chuck's belly-bump attack. This is the "weapon" he uses to take out 80% of his foes: He stops to plant his feet, takes a deep breath and expands his considerable midsection to bump an enemy out of the way. His offensive repertoire also includes a flying kick, but I like to use the belly-bump because it's funnier!

Chuck also interacts with his environment more frequently than other characters in similar games. He uses frogs and crocodiles as springboards, and occasionally catches a ride from a pterodactyl. In the underwater sequences, he floats to the surface, but, if he picks up a rock, he sinks to the bottom. Good graphics are another plus, as *Chuck Rock* features nicely colored scenery and large characters. The main character is a scream; his gangly arms and strutting step are largely responsible for the game's laugh factor.

Sega's *Chuck Rock* really throws his weight around.



A simple password system allows you to continue your game after each of the five levels, which might make the game too easy for veteran gamers. But if you can overlook the faults of the game's sparse, unimaginative soundtrack, you're bound to enjoy the adventures of Chuck Rock.

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The Incredible Crash Dummies

ACCLAIM

For the Nintendo Game Boy ($27.95)

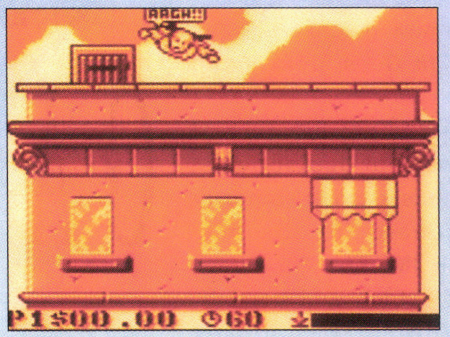
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10

How could anybody *not* love *The Incredible Crash Dummies*? The whole phenomenon stymies me: These characters originated in a public service announcement, for crying out loud! Whatever the reason for their sudden popularity, Acclaim is jumping on the bandwagon with NES and Game Boy titles focusing on the Dummies and their destructive adventures.



The Incredible Crash Dummies: destructive fun for the Game Boy.

And what a game it is! As Slick the Crash Dummy, you must perform various death-defying stunts to earn cash and continue your career. Each day brings on a new challenge: The first day, you'll jump off the roof of a skyscraper and bounce on awnings all the way down to the target on the sidewalk below. Next, it's an obstacle course to test the air bags in a new car design. Day three is spent running into flags while skiing down a snow-covered slope. Get the idea?



With all of these different challenges comes a completely new play mechanic. It's like several different games in one cartridge. By the time you reach the *I Love Lucy*-inspired conveyor belt scene in the munitions factory, you'll be hooked by the game's lunatic pace and fresh sense of humor. "A day without demolition is like a day without sunshine!" muses Slick after crashing an automobile head-on into a brick wall, all in the name of honest work and a day's pay.

The game wouldn't work this well without the ability to grab the player with appealing graphics and an energetic soundtrack, so I'm happy to report that *The Incredible Crash Dummies* excels in all categories. Charmed by the humorous intermissions and the constantly changing game play, I had a hard time putting the Game Boy down.

Don't be a dummy—check this game out!

Acclaim Entertainment Inc.
71 Audrey Ave.
Oyster Bay, NY 11771
(516) 624-8888

Next issue: Would you believe *more* sports software for the Lynx? This is the time of year when all areas of the videogame industry go wild, so expect a few surprises as part of our continuing coverage of the portable gaming world. See you next month!

Reader feedback to this column is always appreciated. Send your comments and suggestions to: VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Attn: Gaming on the Go, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Computer owners with access to the DELPHI information service can also contact me via electronic mail sent to user name VGCHRIS, or stop by the "World of Video Games" special interest group and drop me a note in the public forum.

Our Softwear



VIDEO GAME GLOVES

by Champion

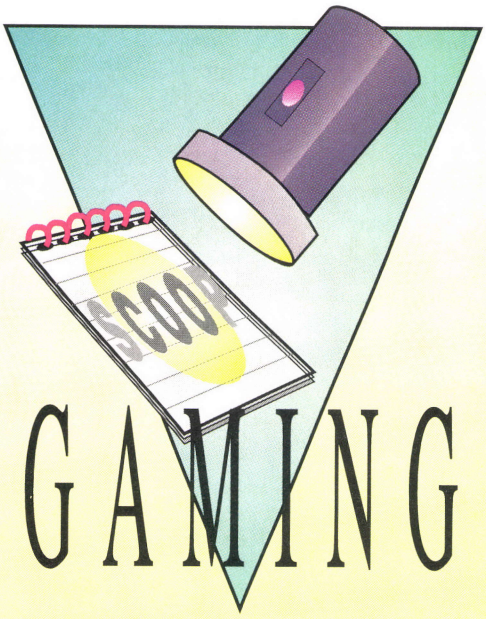
Padded Thumb For Enhanced Video Game Play

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Look for details on Champion Batting Gloves.

CIRCLE #132 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

INSIDE



GAMING

GRAEME'S WORLD OR THE MAKING OF *THE 7TH GUEST*

BY
GRAEME DEVINE
& JAMES D. YEE

Each month,* Inside Gaming *will be a behind-the-scenes sounding board of what's taking place within the electronic-gaming community, giving the game industry a chance to speak out on pertinent issues. It's not speculation written from the outside; rather, it's written by someone with knowledge from inside the business. The views and opinions stated in* Inside Gaming *do not necessarily reflect those of the staff of VG&CE or LFP Inc.

The face of computer gaming has always been an ever-changing one, and a new age is upon us. The current buzzword in the computer world is multimedia, which combines graphics and sounds into an interactive environment. The potential of this new medium is about to be pushed to new heights with the release of *The 7th Guest* from Virgin Software.

The 7th Guest is the creation of Trilobyte Software of Jacksonville, Oregon. Trilobyte is a small company producing software for the new medium of CD-ROM. *The 7th Guest*, its first project, which will be published this Halloween, has already caused a stir in the game community because it is so different from anything else that has yet been produced. No formula here, just new ideas and cutting-edge technology.

Trilobyte doesn't like to think of itself as a game company. Its employees see a larger picture in front of them, as technology and entertainment fuse together to form a new frontier called multimedia. They call what they make "interactive dramas," and the atmosphere at Trilobyte is more akin to a movie production facility than a software development house.

Trilobyte was formed in 1990 by software industry veterans Graeme Devine and Rob Landeros with the purpose of creating new types of entertainment experiences for CD-ROM. Up until now, most CD-ROM game titles have been repackaged floppy titles that haven't used many of the strengths of CD-ROM. *The 7th Guest* is the first title to be designed exclusively for CD-ROM, and it's certainly the first title ever to be larger than a gigabyte: The game will be shipped on two CD-ROMs—the equivalent of over *3,000* floppy disks. Installing that many disks onto your hard drive would take over two weeks if you worked on it full-time, eight hours a day!



As you look at this bedroom, try to remember it doesn't *really* exist.

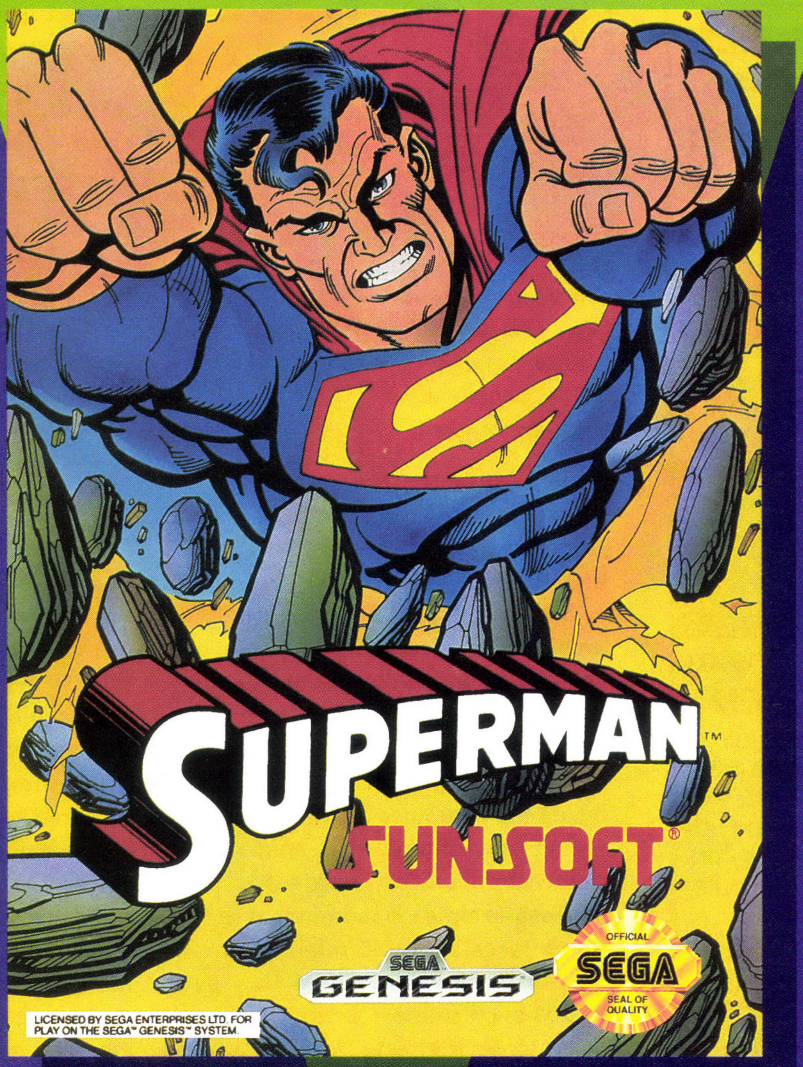
The hauntingly real world of *The 7th Guest* is reminiscent of an old horror movie. You can quite easily forget that you are watching a computer and not a videotape. As the story spins its eerie web, you'll find yourself putting on a couple more lights and checking the opacity of that cushion you're hiding behind!

Set in the old house of eccentric toymaker Henry Stauf, the story centers around the fate of six guests who visit the house one stormy night, drawn there with promises of wealth and power. Each meets a dreadful fate, and a seventh guest—thus the game's name—may become another pawn in Stauf's evil plot to live forever...unless you can intervene.

Playing *The 7th Guest* is more like controlling the action of a movie than playing an electronic game, at least based on games of the past. As the viewer, you guide your on-screen persona through the house via Trilobyte's simple and intuitive interface; the mouse pointer changes as you move it over various objects on the screen. For instance, a candle means you can move in that direction, a key means you can open a door, and so forth. Moving around in *The 7th Guest* is perhaps what sets it apart so much from any other entertainment product; instead of simply scrolling the screen from side to side, you actually move in three dimensions through the rooms.

This differs from products such as Origin's *Ultima Underworld* in that the movement in *The 7th Guest* is "photo-realistic," closely resembling the real-life models. Conversely, in *Ultima Underworld* the movement is based upon polygonal texture mapping. The difference is very striking. Take a close look at some of the screen shots shown here and imagine walking *through* them. That's how good it looks. A lot of the processes used in making *The 7th Guest* are very similar to those used in motion pictures such as *Terminator 2* and *The Lawnmower Man*.

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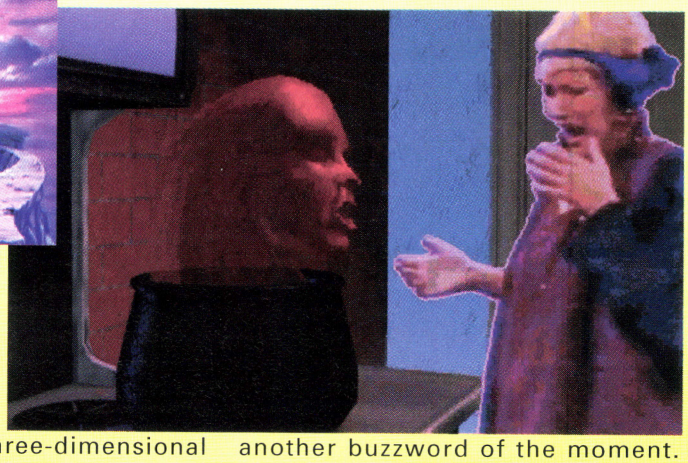
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CIRCLE #134 ON READER SERVICE CARD.







Mixing computer renderings and live actors makes for wild images like a head in a pot.

The fantastic, three-dimensional effects and moves are accomplished using a rendering tool from Autodesk called *3D Studio*. Each room is carefully modeled as if it's designed by an architect for a real building. Each floor, ceiling and wall is covered with materials fitting for the environment, and furniture is added to complete the effect. Cameras and lights that exist only inside the computer world are then set up, and each frame of an animation is then produced, or "rendered." This process is time consuming: A single frame takes about 15 minutes to render—and *The 7th Guest* has over 30,000 such frames! Setting up some of the special effects (such as a head coming out of a soup pot) can take an artist a whole month to get right, and a further week to render. The end effect might last for just a few seconds, but you can guarantee those few seconds are going to be breathtakingly eerie.

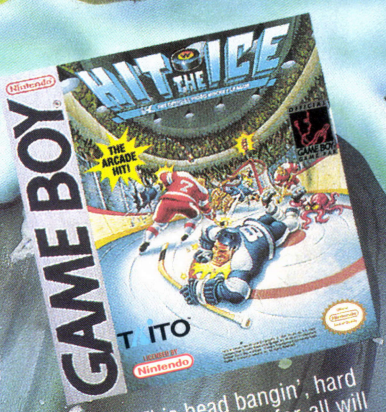
Using this method, an entire set can be created that exists only in the computer, a "virtual" set, to use another buzzword of the moment. Against these virtual sets, real actors add the final element to the drama. There is over half an hour of digitized video footage in *The 7th Guest*. There are seven primary actors and more than 15 extras. The actors were filmed against a blue screen and had to act as if they were inside the various rooms of the house. Each frame was then captured and the blue background cut out. These captured images were then composited onto the rendered backgrounds. The process is exactly like making a special-effects-filled horror flick. The actors have to work hard to make everything believable, since there are special effects they can't see when the scene is shot.

All of this was quite new to Trilobyte. Many of the participants had never handled video production and had to perfect many techniques during production. Rob Landeros was in charge of the day-to-day video production and acted as producer on the video portion of the project. Matthew

CATCH THE TAITO WAVE



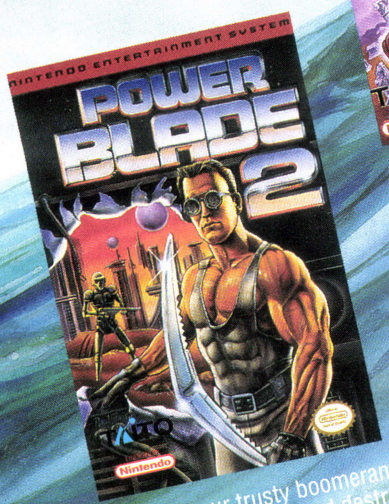
There's bone crunching action for Sega Genesis too. Unless you want some free dental work, you had better stick in the mouthpiece, strap on the pads and CHECK it out!



This head bangin', hard checkin', free-for-all will rattle your bones and send you flyin' into the next county. So, lace 'em up and CHECK it out!



You and your three pals will journey through maze after maze packed with crazy creatures and hair raising adventure. They'll have you climbing the walls and hanging from the ceiling.



You and your trusty boomerang are on a secret seek and destroy mission. This is action with a cutting edge that will keep on comin' back for more.



While supervising the Button Pusher Division of Spacely Sprockets, George Jetson notices that the robots and computers are malfunctioning. With the help of Jane, Judy, and Elroy, George's mission is to find and stop the cause of this problem.



Fred uncovers a treasure map and sets off on a wild adventure to find the loot. Help Fred through seven adventure-filled stages in this journey.

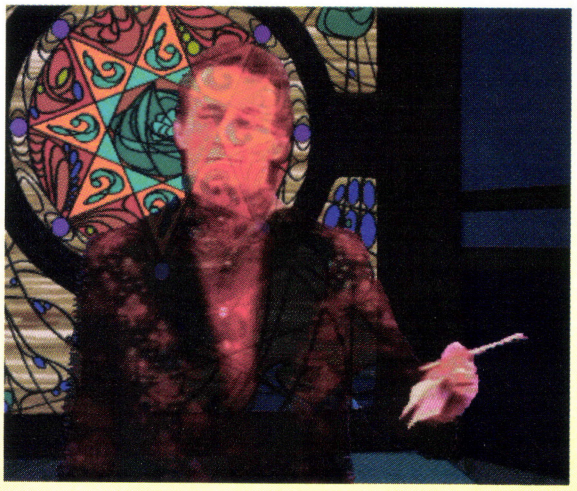
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CIRCLE #135 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

TAITO
THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN

A ghostly guest and a visit to Henry Stauf's elaborate game room





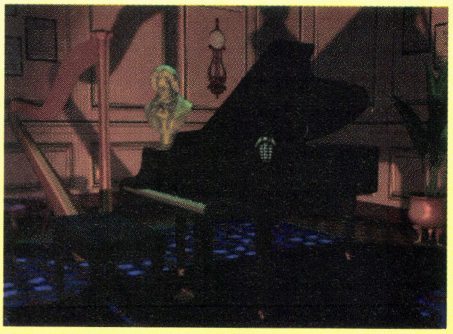




Costello, the scriptwriter, had to deal with a multitude of problems as he was writing for a medium he had not seen before nor could know the limits of. New tools had to be developed at Trilobyte to deal with the storage of all those digitized frames—each one would take up about a megabyte uncompressed! At one stage, it was even calculated that building the house from scratch would be cheaper than using all this digital technology.

Early in the project, Trilobyte decided to use the Super VGA resolution for the IBM version of *The 7th Guest*. The 640 x 480 screen used is the closest yet to that of a normal television set, leaving the viewer further convinced that this is no ordinary computer game, but an extension of television itself. Further tools to deal with the playback of animations from a CD-ROM drive had to be invented. Some in the industry declared this impossible, but Trilobyte proved the whole world wrong.

After the video shoot was finished, sound effects and music were added to each scene. Trilobyte hired a sound production facility, Staunton Studios, to add each and every sound effect.



The 7th Guest has over 600 separate "sound cues," almost twice as many as the motion picture *Star Wars*. Dianne Watson at Trilobyte sometimes had to sit through several hours of thunderclaps or pig squeals to pick the one that was "just right."

The music score was handled by George Sanger, "The Fatman," of *Wing Commander* fame. Trilobyte would send him video footage of the various scenes and special effects, and he would then write the music for them. The music is more akin to that of a movie than a game, and is certainly the most extensive musical score ever made for a computer product. The Fatman's music adds a complete emotional level to the product so that the player will scream with fright at the least expected moments.

Playing *The 7th Guest* is a unique experience, unparalleled in the computer-entertainment industry. This is the closest you can get to being in a movie while staying within the comfort and safety of your own home.

Born in England, Graeme Devine has programmed on almost all U.K. computer platforms. His previous game, Spot, *was based on 7-Up's mischievous characters. He is Trilobyte's president, and is programming* The 7th Guest.

James D. Yee has been involved in electronic games since 1981, from programming games on the TRS-80 to producing demos on Atari computers. He's currently in Japan developing the SNES version of FaceBall 2000 *and working on a multiplayer 3-D RPG system called* M.A.G.I.C.

We hope you like this format, and your feedback is appreciated. Please send your comments or suggestions for subjects to be dealt with in future installments of* Inside Gaming *to:* VG&CE, *Attn:* Inside Gaming, *9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210.

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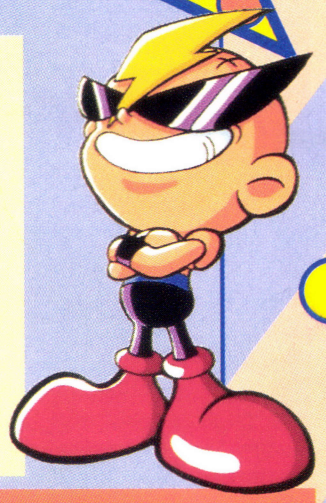
TurboDuo Free Game Sweepstakes



Turbo Technologies Inc. would like your help in deciding which free game to bundle with the national launch of the TurboDuo in 1993.

The TurboDuo is the first fully integrated chip and CD system in America. Currently, for the Southern California launch, the TurboDuo is being bundled with five free games, which are *Gate of Thunder, Bonk's Adventure, Bonk's Revenge, Ys—Book I & II* and *Ninja Spirit*.

Be part of the excitement surrounding the TurboDuo national launch. Help TTI select the single most important game to be bundled free of charge with the system purchase. Choose your favorite games, from shooters to RPGs to action adventures.



CHOOSE THE RIGHT GAME AND WIN THE ENTIRE SYSTEM



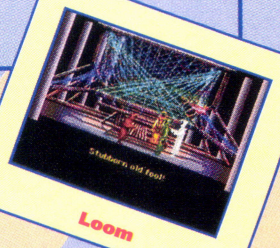
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Dragon Slayer



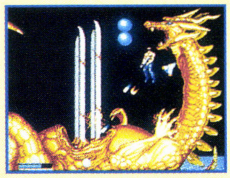
Riot City



Lords of Thunder



Buster Brothers



Forgotten Worlds



Shadow of the Beast

Winners will be drawn from the entries received, and will be announced in the March 1993 issue of VG&CE. The grand prize winner will receive a TurboDuo with the chosen bundled game. There will be five second-prize winners who will each receive a Super CD of TTI's choice. Also, 20 third-prize winners will win a TurboGrafx T-shirt.

All entries must b received by Decembe 31, 1992. Only one entry per person. No purchase needed in order to enter. Illegible or incomplete entries are not eligible. Send your entry to: TTI/VG&CE Free Game Sweepstakes, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Good luck!

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The winners will be selected by the VG&CE judges, who shall have complete and sole discretion in selecting winners. All decisions are final. All taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of the winners. Winners release TTI, VG&CE, L.F.P. Inc., and their subsidiaries and affiliates in all matters relating to the use of prizes.

Winners grant permission for use of their names, addresses and photos for advertising or promotional purposes without additional compensation. Contest void where prohibited by law, and otherwise governed by California law.

COMPUTER GAME PREVIEWS

FIRST LOOK

Dog Eat Dog

BUENA VISTA SOFTWARE

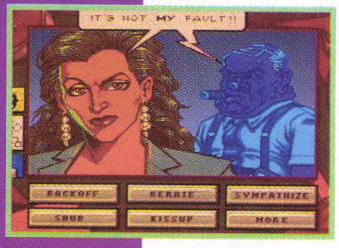
Version Previewed: IBM PC

Tired of "put the gold key in the silver lock" graphic adventures, or computer games that require you to save the souls of a billion inhabitants from the corruption of the latest marauding demon? Is making it through the day without throwing a full cup of coffee at your boss enough of an adventure? Then Buena Vista's *Dog Eat Dog* will probably be the most welcome release of the year.

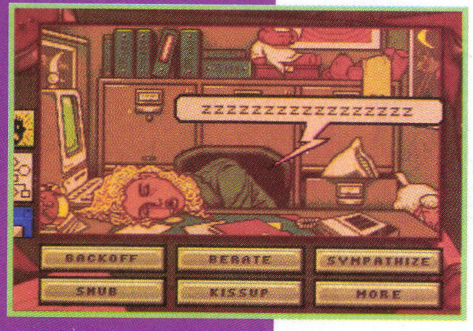
Players assume the role of either Julie Bloom or Joe Sellars, two entry-level employees at the mysterious BBBI corporation. Throughout their day, they must tolerate broken copy machines, sexual harassment, confusing instructions and some of the biggest egos to hit the computer-gaming world since the Avatar.

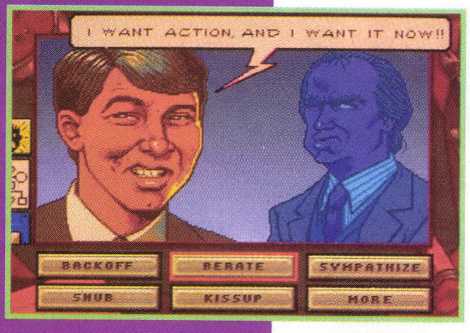
A simple point-and-click system allows players to travel throughout the office and select one of eight attitudes to adopt when talking to their coworkers.

The goal in *Dog Eat Dog* is simple: stay employed. Players try to combine hard work, self pride, threats and ego stroking to gain the rare promotion. Ultimately, they might gain insight into the deepest corporate secret: what BBBI stands for and, more importantly, what it *does*.



While a corporate ladder simulator may sound about as entertaining as a simulator for making toast, *Dog Eat Dog* carries it off with constant humor. Most of the encountered characters are just short of insufferable, making them hilarious. John Duggan's artwork gives the game the sufficiently jaded look it needs to pull off the parody. However, since all of the characters are realistic enough to remind players of people they may know in real life, this might not be the best game to play at lunch on an office computer.





Waxworks

ACCOLADE

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Horrorsoft, the developers behind both *Elvira* games are back with *Waxworks*, a graphic adventure available soon from Accolade for IBM PC compatibles and the Commodore Amiga ($59.95).

Steering away from the standard, fantasy role-playing dungeons and medieval towns, *Waxworks* begins in the mansion of the player's dead uncle Boris, who, like most things in *Waxworks*, is technically dead. Play leads through ancient Egypt, 19th-century England, a mine shaft and appropriately enough, a cemetery. Uncle Boris is only as far away as a crystal ball and some psychic energy.

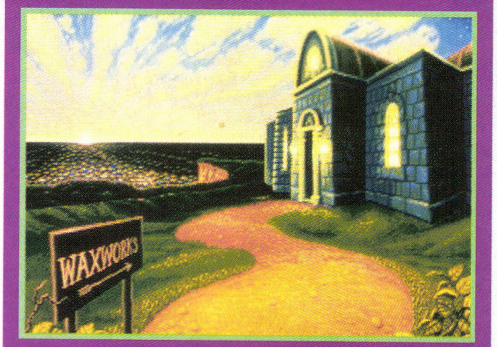




Waxworks also provides variety in the assortment of items it provides for character use. In addition to the standard weapons, food and lamps, players may pick up such unusual tools as a tuning fork.



Like the *Elvira* games, *Waxworks* is not for the squeamish: Enemies bleed with every wound, and, rest assured, when they polish characters off, fans of internal organs will get an in-depth view of their severed head and throat. Complete with exposed cleavage, *Waxworks* will most likely carry an advisory similar to the one on the *Elvira* games.



Inspector Gadget, Mission 1: Global Terror

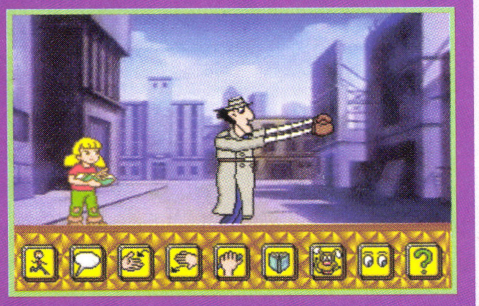
AZEROTH

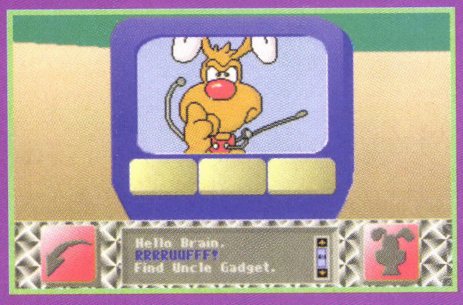
Version Previewed: IBM PC

Inspector Gadget, animated star of television, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and Life cereal boxes, will soon be appearing in a graphic adventure for the IBM PC. Players may take the role of Gadget's niece, Penny, or his dog, Brain, in an effort to find the missing detective, who's the only one capable of stopping Dr. Claw's robots and their rampage of ecological terrorism.

Inspector Gadget, Mission 1: Global Terror takes players around the globe to Brazil, China and Russia in their efforts to save the world and learn a bit of geography in the process. The first game produced and marketed by Azeroth, *Gadget* was produced entirely in-house, with periodic inspection from the cartoon's producers.

A sequel is planned for some time in May 1993. *Inspector Gadget* will be available in IBM PC, IBM CD-ROM, Macintosh and Tandy Video Information System CD versions.





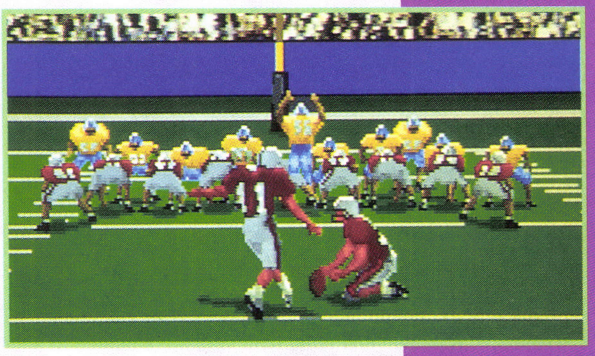


Front Page Sports: Football

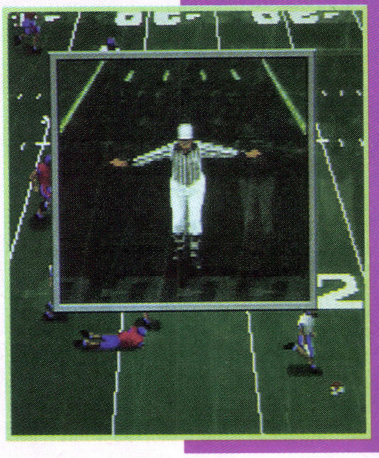
DYNAMIX

Version Previewed: IBM PC









Football fans run the gamut from those who know whether any given player is left- or right-handed to those who know nothing about the game, but simply like the violence. Dynamix has spent thousands of man-hours creating a game that should appeal to both, *Front Page Sports: Football*.

A game for one or two players, *Front Page* is likely to be the most comprehensive representation of football ever on the IBM PC. In addition to statistics for over 1,400 players (names have been changed slightly because Dynamix does not have the NFL license), *Front Page* features continuous play from season to season, with options for a draft and player retirement. A play editor allows players to edit one of the 200 stock plays or create their own to try out on the practice field and under the stadium lights.

One of the best features even for nonsports fans is the VCR option. This allows plays to be viewed from nine different angles, with the camera fixed or floating. Those wanting to simulate an entire season will notice another innovative aspect: When most football games simulate entire games, they simply generate random numbers that are plugged into the appropriate formulas to generate the score, injuries, etc. However, *Front Page Sports* actually plays an entire game, so players can watch individual highlights for competitions that they took no part in.

An expansion disk is also planned, which will contain actual NFL teams and 200 more plays, as well as modem and printing capabilities.

COMPUTER STRATEGIES

BY MIKE DAVILA

Teaching the Third Reich a Lesson in Escape from Wolfenstein, Part One

APOGEE

Id Software's *Wolfenstein 3-D Episode One: Escape from Wolfenstein* is one of the most exciting and extensive pieces of shareware to be released. This month, we'll show you how to get started on the first four levels of this episode and what you should look out for. Next month, we'll continue our adventure with detailed maps of the remaining levels and help you get by the end boss.

LEVEL 1



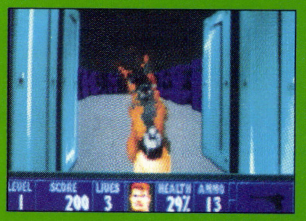
When you first leave the prisoner cell area, try to pick up as much ammo as you can.



You won't need any food at first, since your health is at 100%. Come back to this location later when you need it.



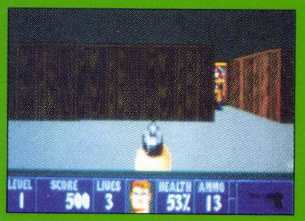
Your first encounter with the Third Reich! Let him have it with one or two rounds, but don't waste ammo until you find some more clips.



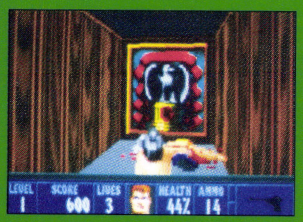
This isn't Lassie! When you first escape the prison cell, head right and you'll find a kennel, some food and a couple of easy moving targets.



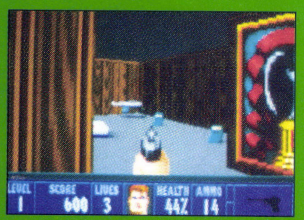
After you explore the kennel, head back to the main area, where you killed your first soldier, and go right.



Always keep your eyes peeled around corners; you never know who you'll find.



This isn't just another pretty flag. Give it a push to see if there's a room back there.



Ahhh...success! A semi-automatic pistol. Now we can really have some fun.



Hidden Nazi treasures. Don't pass these up; you'll want to pick up as many as possible to kick up your score.



The elevator to Level 2. Next time it won't be so easy.

LEVEL 2



When you start off on this level go left and do some German-shepherd hunting.



Don't forget to eat your Alpo! Dog food will also recharge your health.



As disgusting as it sounds, drinking the blood from any Nazi victims that you find will also recharge your health.



Remember, try to check as many walls for hidden rooms as possible, even if it seems like nothing is there.



This guy isn't Sergeant Shultz! He means business, and there are times when you'll run into a group of them. Make sure that you have lots of ammo from now on.



The key to Level 3, but first you'll have to get past this dog meat!



The exit to Level 3. Now might be a good time to go back, find some ammo and medicine or food to recharge your health.

LEVEL 3



You can't be a wimp any longer. This is where things get really tough. Don't take anything for granted.



The prison cell area in Level 3 has a hidden room in it, but, more importantly, the key for the exit to Level 4 is also located there.



Don't worry about these guys—they're just there for decoration.



Great! Yet more treasure. And remember, the more treasure, the more points—and more points means extra lives.



Some rooms and areas have multiple entry points. Use this advantage to sneak up behind guards and ambush them.



An empty room can yield many surprises if you look carefully.



You can easily get lost in this maze of rooms; try to map your way around for now.



Onward to Level 4!

LEVEL 4



As soon as you start Level 4, face right and push that wall. You'll find a secret room here with plenty of medicine and ammo.



Rooms like this can be very dangerous. There could be Nazis around every corner. Also, don't go crazy looking for hidden rooms in these blocks; they are too small to hold anything.



Don't bother trying to open these cell doors; they're just a façade.



If you're starting to get nauseated, now might be a good time to take a break and save your game.



One gunshot might trigger an onslaught of Nazis, so it's always wise to inspect an area for other men before ambushing someone.



You can see the goodies, but you can't get to them. Try pushing a few walls.



Surprise, a machine gun! Now you can *really* cause some bloodshed!



The key to Level 5, now all you have to do is find the exit!

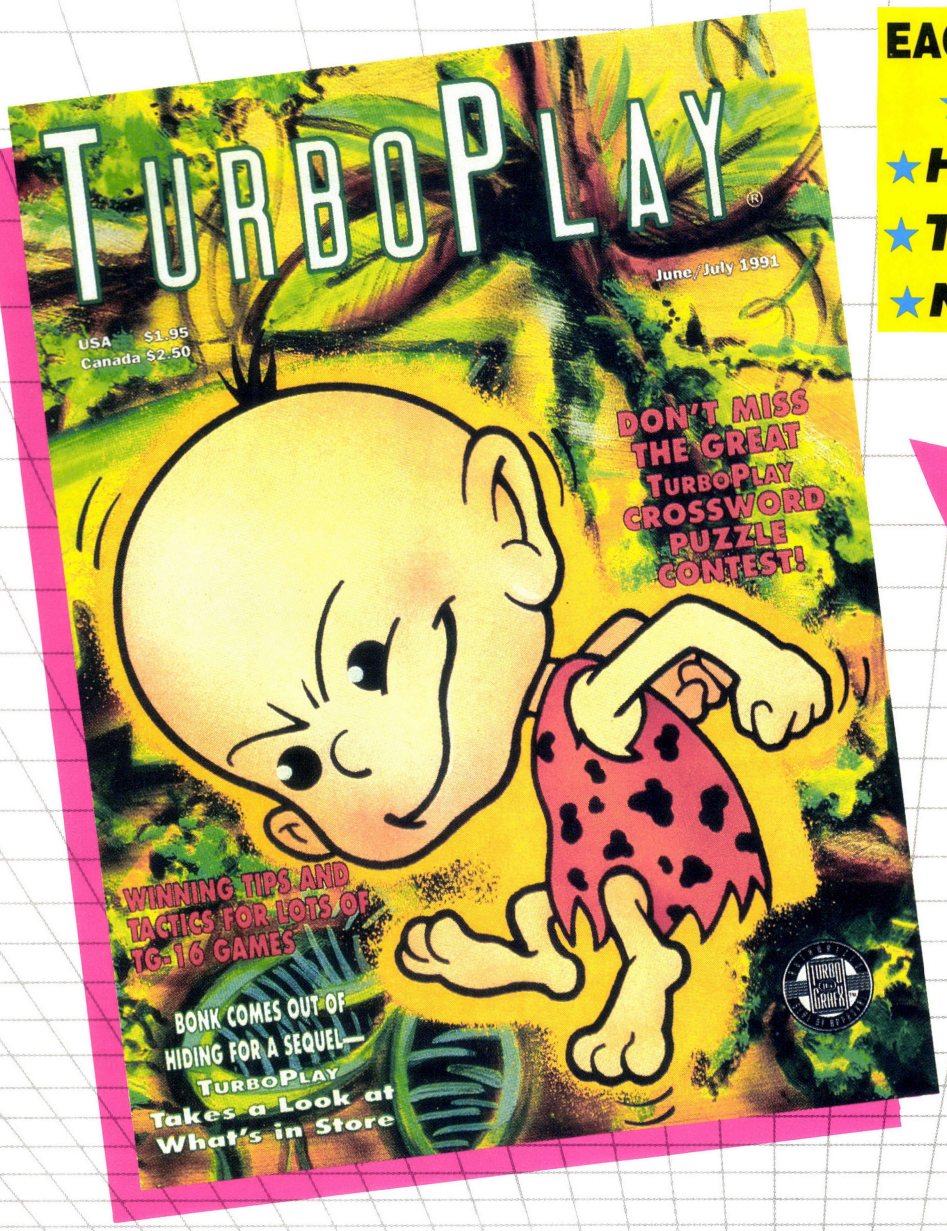
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COMPUTER GAME REVIEWS

Darklands

MICROPROSE

Version: IBM PC ($69.99)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC								8		
GRAPHICS						6				
PLAYABILITY								8		
OVERALL								8		

For years, I've been harping on the complete lack of imagination in fantasy role-playing games. Virtually every one was based, to a greater or lesser degree, on *The Lord of the Rings* and none came even close to being as good as the book. While *Darklands* does fall into the fantasy role-playing genre, it makes some subtle, but important, philosophical changes to the way it approaches the fantasy role-playing medium.

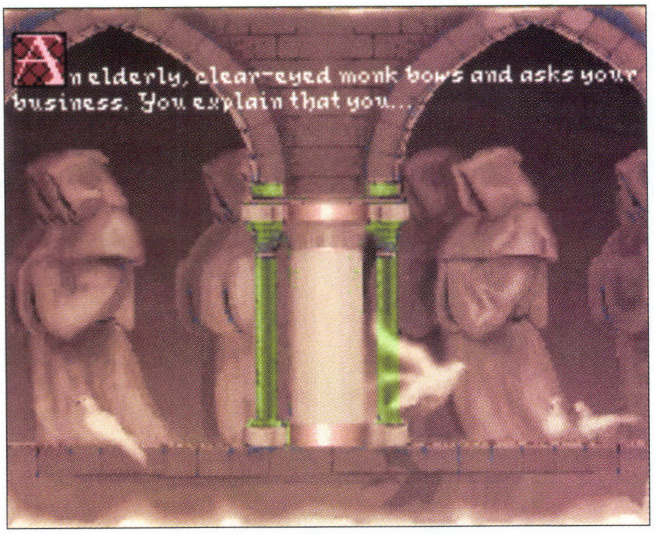
Most importantly, the game is set in a real time and place: Germany in the 15th century, at the very end of the Middle Ages. This was a tumultuous time in European history; the Black Death had killed a third of the population of Europe less than 50 years earlier and there were still periodic outbreaks. The Catholic Church dominated every aspect of personal and public life, and Martin Luther's Reformation hadn't yet begun. The remnant of the Holy Roman Empire, which had existed for 500 years and encompassed basically all of the German-speaking areas of Europe, was still a powerful political force, but Germanic Europe was a loose conglomeration of kingdoms, duchies and city-states. The combination of the Black Death, feudalism, corruption in the Church and the basic insularity of the communities in the Holy Roman Empire contributed to a view of the world that was superstitious, credulous, spiritual and, oddly enough, adventurous. Medieval outlooks and attitudes were very different from our own, and it's important to remember that while you're playing *Darklands*. The tack *Darklands* takes with the medieval world it re-creates is to make real what its inhabitants *believed* to be real, whether it actually is or not. This approach lets *Darklands* have such things as witches and monsters, but it also lets them exist in a recognizable landscape.





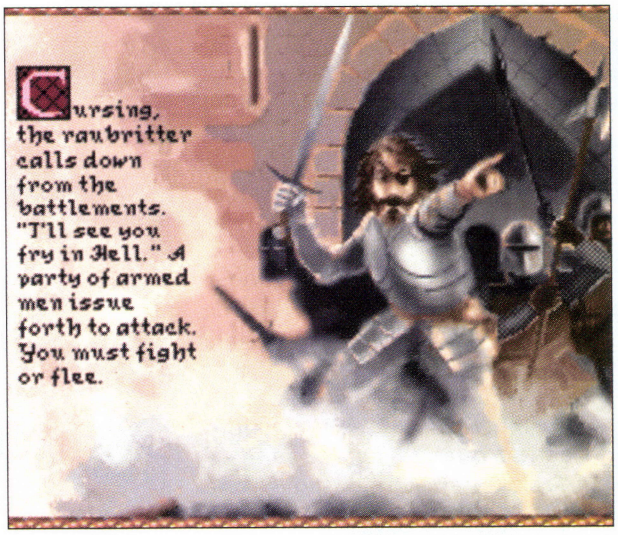
Five or six years ago, it was a rare occasion that saw a game ship on more than a single disk. Then two-disk games became common, and three or four weren't unheard of. Now, with games becoming more and more elaborate, the stacks of disks are getting higher and higher. *Darklands* is no exception. The version I installed came on 11 5.25" disks, and the installation took over half an hour. I suspect that it won't be much longer until CD-ROM drives will be mandatory for game players.

A good bit of the space on the disks is taken up with graphic and sound files; *Darklands* has both in large quantity. Unfortunately, the quantity isn't matched by the quality. The sound and music are above average, and while the music isn't from the period, it at least has the flavor of medieval music. The graphics, on the other hand, are fine for lower denomination machines, but this is the age of SVGA and high-resolution monitors. Nothing shows the flaws in graphics like a high-resolution display, and those in *Darklands* look blocky on my screen. The artists have tried to overcome the limitations with heavy antialiasing and blending, but the effect is to make some screens blurry and nearly unrecognizable.











Nearly all actions are selected from lists of choices that appear over the top of the graphics, while things pertaining to the system are set from drop-down menus at the top of the screen. While the game is still based on the tired old Dungeons & Dragons attributes and hit points system, it does make some more subtle departures from FRPG tradition: It replaces magic with alchemy and the cults of saints, adds Virtue as a primary character attribute and emphasizes experience over hit points.

What all this comes down to is that, while there are still more aspects of old-style fantasy role-playing than I might like, I think *Darklands* is on the right track. The game doesn't insist on sending you off on a do-or-die quest, but offers you the opportunity to explore its enormous world at your leisure, something I like very much. It doesn't rely on arbitrary puzzle-solving, placing more emphasis on exploration and contact with other characters. There are, however, still far too many random, pointless encounters and battles; I was attacked by wolves three times in the space of ten minutes. The battle system itself is, thankfully, automated, though you can fight by hand if you want to spend the time at it.

Darklands, while flawed in some ways, is the best FRPG I've seen in quite awhile. The setting is interesting and the approach to the genre shows great promise for the future.

—Tom Malcolm

MicroProse
180 Lakefront Drive
Hunt Valley, MD 21030
(410) 771-1151

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10

Dave didn't think that MicroProse worked hard enough to expand its audience, but Andy felt that MicroProse fans will really dig into the game's comprehensive design.

The Legend of Kyrandia, Book One

WESTWOOD STUDIOS

Version: IBM PC ($59.99)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC										
GRAPHICS										
PLAYABILITY										
OVERALL										

Malcolm may have been a jester, but nobody found his type of humor funny. So, after murdering the king and queen of Kyrandia, he was hunted down and sealed into his castle, where it was hoped he could do no further harm. Unfortunately, he had the legendary Kyragem with him, the source of magical power in Kyrandia. Without the focusing power of the gem, Kyrandia was fast depleted of magic, allowing Malcolm his escape. Now all of Kyrandia is at his mercy. It falls to Brandon, grandson of the chief of the mystics, to find and defeat Malcolm.

So begins *The Legend of Kyrandia, Book One*, the newest adventure game from Westwood Studios, the people who brought us the ever-popular *Eye of the Beholder* (*EOB*) series. But, whereas the *EOB* games were dungeon action quests, *The Legend of Kyrandia* is an enchanting adventure game in the tradition of Sierra's fantasy titles. If the quality of this game is any indication, Sierra has serious competition.









The Legend of Kyrandia begins with a fully animated prologue, featuring Malcolm and his escape from the castle. As you watch Malcolm's devious tricks, the topnotch graphics and animation lead you, anxious to begin play, into the opening scenes with Malcolm and Brandon's grandfather. After Malcolm turns Brandon's grandfather to stone, the story falls into your capable hands, and you must guide Brandon toward his confrontation with Malcolm.

The game's interface is smooth and logical. To move Brandon, you simply click on a location and Brandon walks there, automatically avoiding obstacles. To find an exit from a scene, you move the mouse to the edge of the screen or over an object, such as a door, that you think is an exit. If you can move in that direction, the cursor changes into a pointing arrow. Moreover, because the game's scenes are so well organized, mapping is unnecessary. You'll navigate easily throughout Kyrandia.

Neither must you do a lot of screen hopping. Except to access the game's option screen—wherein you can toggle the music on or off, save and load games, etc.—the entire game takes place on the one screen. Even Brandon's inventory, comprising ten small boxes at the bottom of the display, is readily available. You can add or remove items to or from the inventory with a click of the mouse. To use an item, you pick it up, place it over the object on which you want to use it, and then click the mouse.

As mentioned previously, the graphics—designed by head artist Rick Parks and a staff of 12 people—are a delight. In addition, the music team of Paul Madra, Frank Klepcaki and Dwight Okahara has put together an enchanting soundtrack, with frequent song changes and catchy themes. While most game soundtracks quickly become annoying, *Kyrandia*'s endures even through hours of play.

In short, *The Legend of Kyrandia* is an outstanding game from a design team with an already impressive track record. Although *Kyrandia* is nothing like the *EOB* series, even fans of those action games will find themselves mesmerized by its quirky, humorous and magic-filled story. I for one can hardly wait for *Book Two*.

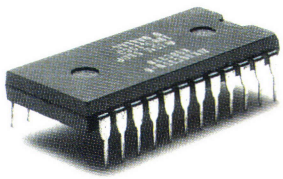
—Clayton Walnum

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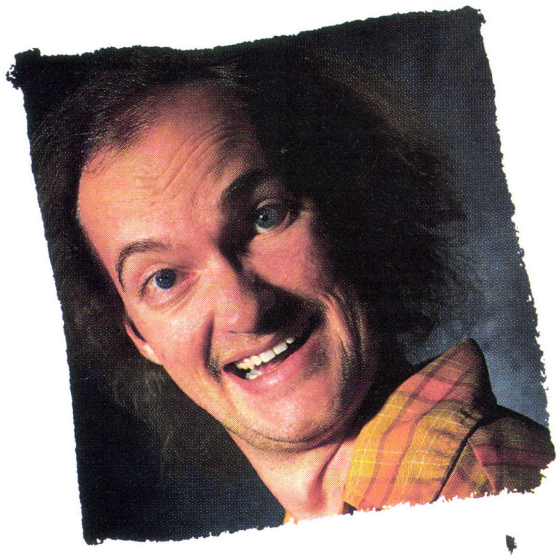
EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE										
CB										
DM										
MD										

In Mike's words, *Kyrandia* is "a well-produced game," and Chris noted that it was "pretty flawless." Dave said that it was a little too simple, but still interesting.



THIS OPPONENT IS PROGRAMMED TO BE CHALLENGING.

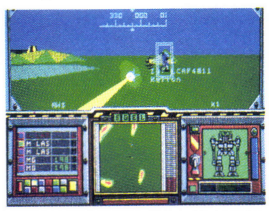


this one wants to rip your lungs out.

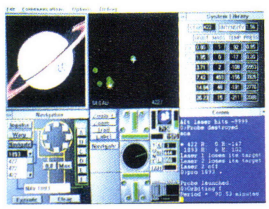
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The Summoning

EVENT HORIZON

Version: IBM PC ($59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10





The Summoning takes place on the island home of Shadow Weaver, a less-than-angelic entity who decides the world was made for his own acquisition. During a surprise assault on the Council, the player's alter ego, the Champion, is quickly transported into Shadow Weaver's labyrinth to hopefully do the one thing years of training would finally realize: save the world and liberate lots of gold.

The entire game uses an isometric approach through more than 40 levels of dungeons and caverns. Traveling through the labyrinth causes the screen to scroll in smooth progression to keep the player centered. To greatly aid in the record keeping, an auto-mapping feature is provided that does an excellent job. Also, if there's an itch to get the maps from screen to paper, just press a button and off the map goes to the printer for a hard copy printout.

Numerous nonplayer characters are strewn about the levels, and players are free to strike up conversations that can also be dumped to the printer. Using a keyword system, the NPCs either divulge more of the rich history of the labyrinth and its inhabitants, or offer the prospect of taking on a side quest for personal glory or the acquiring of a few special items. Although the game's nonlinear approach would allow one to avoid more than a few of these quests, some are certainly required to be completed to progress further into Shadow Weaver's lair. And remember, if ever there was a unifying doctrine that binds all adventurers, it's this: save often!





Puzzles and problems are in abundance, especially in the department of dungeon access. Many levels contain areas that are not immediately accessible and require the cunning use of the environment to overcome. The placing of a weighted object on a pressure plate to close a gaping pit, or the pulling of a lever to open a stubborn door are just a few of the possible ways for items to interact with environment.

The entire combat system is relatively simplistic, requiring no special key press other than the attack button. With its real-time approach, players can run when a fight is going badly, or avoid a fight entirely. Clever players might use sliding doors to their advantage and pulverize monsters, or lure them into teleporters and a variety of traps. Among the more unusual of these pitfalls are the large, spherical, *Indiana Jones*-style boulders that roll along passageways and hit with consistent damage. They also make short work of any monster that might happen to cross their path. Also, ranged weapons may be used for distance attacks, and spells may be cast in one of four categories for either offense or defense.

Sounds are nothing overly impressive, but they serve their purpose in an adequate fashion. Footsteps fall and doors slide with the sound of grinding chains, but not a peep is heard from the monsters, which is a bit disappointing since the game is strong in every other department.

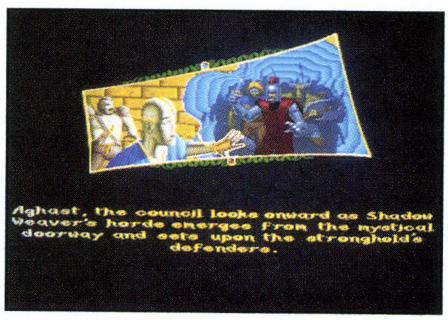
Although the game offers much more than this review can cover, it stands that *The Summoning* works to bring a finely crafted story into an adventure of a new sort. A qualified blend of puzzle solving, monster squelching and scavenger hunting makes *The Summoning* a game CRPG extremists should seriously consider adding to their collection.

—Danny Han

Strategic Simulations Inc.
675 Almanor Ave., Suite 201
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 737-6800







EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10

Mike and Andy both thought of EA's *The Immortal* when *The Summoning* booted up. Chris thought its structure was too rooted in "dice and paper" rules.

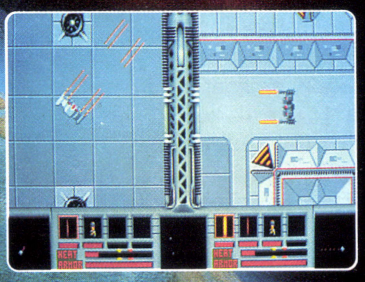
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The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes: The Case of the Serrated Scalpel

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Version: IBM PC ($59.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC								■		
GRAPHICS								■		
PLAYABILITY							■			
OVERALL								■		

The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes reeks of the kind of project the major developers conceive of, then spend as much money as possible trying to make approach the graphics and sound capability of the demo. Luckily, EA remembered that people (or the next best thing, reviewers) would be playing, and added a story line steeped deeply enough in Baker Street lore to please the hard-core Holmes fans without alienating the rest of the public.

Sarah Carroway, a promising young actress, is found dead behind the Regency Theatre, her throat slashed open. Inspector Lestrade, mistaken as always, assumes she's another victim of Jack the Ripper. Upon cursory examination, however, Holmes is convinced that someone else is responsible—and the game is afoot.

Lost Files uses a point-and-click system similar to those in the Lucasfilm games, with different dialogue options for each conversation.

The game's greatest strengths lie not with the title character but with his perennial sidekick, Dr. Watson. The good doctor often serves as a foil, providing the necessary insight to keep the quest for clues moving. More importantly, he keeps a journal recording every conversation. Reaching several hundred short "pages" by endgame, the journal is easy to use and even has a key word search function. One note of special commendation to R.J. Berg for capturing Watson's humor so well. Parchingly dry and always on target, the jokes may not be appreciated by everyone, but they're exquisite nevertheless.

"It's too linear!" is the cry graphic adventures inevitably provoke. But with such a tight trail of clues, suspects and scientific deductions, there's no way the main thrust of the adventure could be anything but linear. What the designers could have done to prolong game play was simply introduce subplots. Also, Holmes makes numerous deductions that could have been left up to the player. For example, he looks at a man, notices his face, his clothing, the hair on his jacket, a few other trivial details and manages to blackmail him for all of the pertinent information. The player could have made some of these deductions, given a few lists of options—something that happens far too infrequently. This is especially true when Holmes uses his chemistry lab. Aside from lighting alcohol burners and stuffing the key objects into test tubes, the scientific work is on autopilot. It would not have taken that much documentation to create an option for players to mess around with the various chemicals and still produce the desired answers. The ability to save up to 30 games is rather useless since it's impossible to do anything that could prevent a player from finishing. The hand-holding only gets blatant after the murderers have been apprehended, when the designers added several annoying "find the key" puzzles simply to prolong the game's duration. The scenario, in fact, seems to have been written well after most of the locations were programmed into the game.

Perhaps the most difficult problem facing players is finding sufficient room on their hard drive to load the game. *Lost Files* can be installed two ways: disk-space saving (15 megabytes) or game-time saving (30 megabytes). The graphics are cleaner than most games in this format, and the sound effects and voices are better than the music, but they don't justify the game's price or its use of disk storage space.

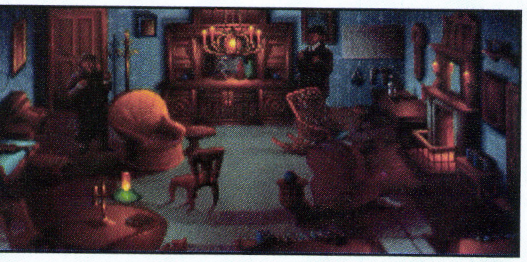
Fans of graphic adventures will find *Sherlock Holmes* to be distinguishable only by its time period and setting. Anyone who has ever yearned to join the Baker Street Irregulars should love the game, even though they may often feel more like Watson than the great detective.

—David S. Moskowitz

Electronic Arts
1450 Fashion Island Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94404
(415) 572-ARTS









EDITORS' CORNER

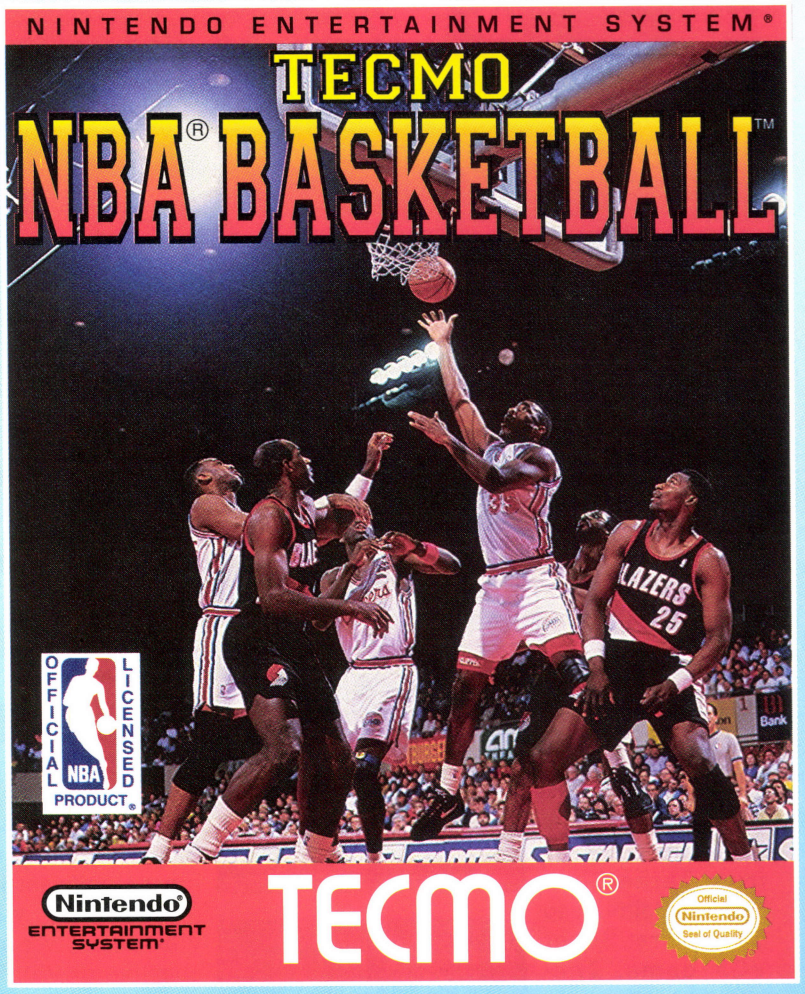
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE									■	
CB								■		
DM								■		
MD								■		

Chris said it was a "cool game," while Andy and Mike appreciated the simple interface the game has. Everyone concurred that there are some nice effects too.

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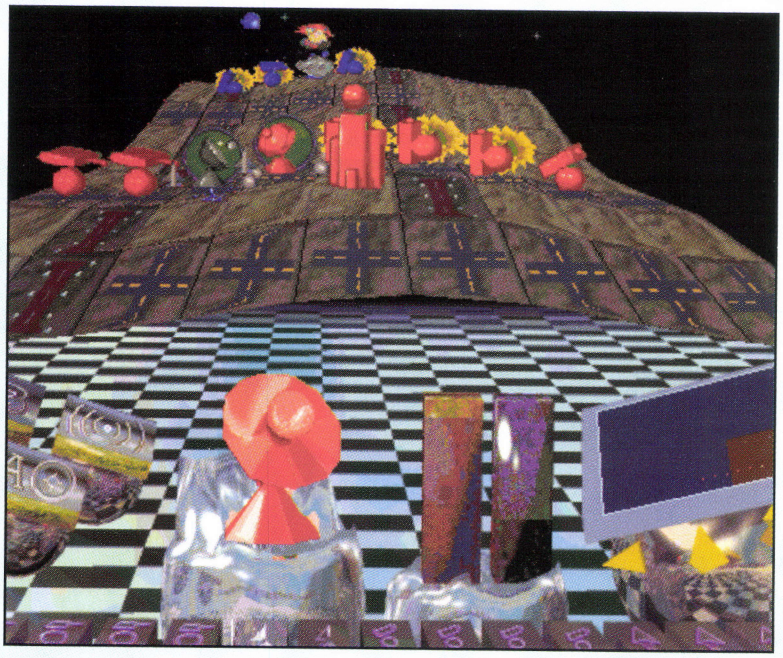
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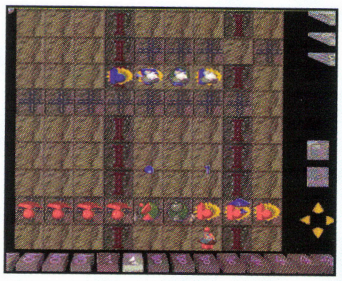
Theatre of War

THREE-SIXTY PACIFIC

Version: IBM PC ($49.95)

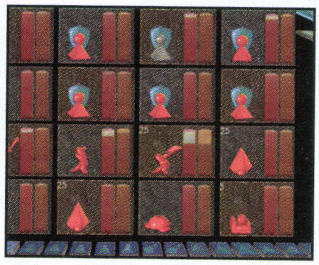
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

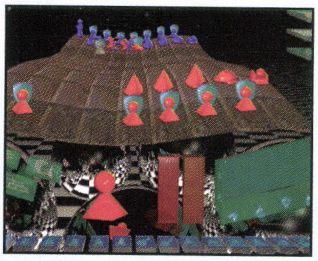


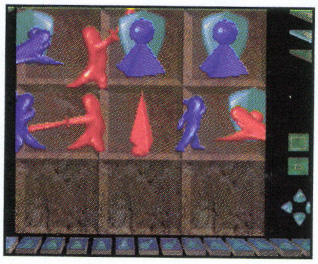




Super VGA has been around for awhile, but, so far, it's had no support in the gaming world. Luckily for those with Super VGA systems, game designers are starting to take notice, and Super VGA games are on their way. Heading the list is *Theatre of War* from Three-Sixty Pacific. Claiming to be the first Super VGA game, *Theatre of War* can only be described as real-time chess.







Unlike chess, though, when a *Theatre of War* game begins, you can choose from three different sets of pieces: Medieval, the Great War and Contemporary. Each set has its own playing characteristics, with abilities from wielding a sword to launching missiles. You and your opponent (the computer or another human) simultaneously move your 16 pieces on the variable-sized, multiterrain board. In the tradition of *Battle Chess*, when opponents meet, they change to their battle forms and duke it out, hacking or bashing until one falls dead or retreats.

To keep track of damage, each piece has an energy and health line. If a piece's energy runs out, it can no longer move or perform any other activity—at least not until its energy is restored. If its health line runs out, the piece is out of the game. A piece's energy or health can be restored only by resting and only if it has an unobstructed supply line.

One of *Theatre of War*'s most significant features is its game board, which can be viewed in two modes, perspective or flat. The perspective view is downright eerie. As you watch the enemy pieces drift toward you from the far distance, you'll feel as though you've entered a strange, alternate universe filled with bizarre machines. As mentioned previously, the playing board is not a fixed size. In fact, depending on the scenario chosen, the board may be larger than what you're allowed to view on one screen (this is almost always true in perspective mode), in which case you must scan the board by clicking on-screen arrows or using your keyboard's arrow keys.

One thing is for sure: The designers of *Theatre of War* are fans of Bullfrog's games (*Populous* and *Powermonger*). The screen display, although not copied from another game, looks Bullfrog-inspired, with the 3-D board in the center and the game controls arranged around it. The game scenarios, too, are handled Bullfrog-like, with different board layouts and varied options in each, forcing the player to create new strategies for each scenario.

Now the big question: Why Super VGA? Considering the risk Three-Sixty is taking on a Super VGA game (a very limited audience), one would expect the game to require high-resolution graphics to obtain convincing displays. Strangely, although the screens are gorgeous, with ray-traced reflections and finely detailed objects, the game board and pieces look as if they could have been done easily in regular VGA. One has to wonder why Three-Sixty chose to limit the game to Super VGA. But, whatever its reasons, the graphics are excellent and the animation well designed.

Despite its obvious nod to Bullfrog, *Theatre of War* is no clone. It is a thoroughly original and engrossing strategy game that'll delight most board-game fans. If you have a Super VGA graphics board setup, you'll want to check it out.

—Clayton Walnum

Three-Sixty Pacific Inc.
2105 S. Bascom Ave.
Campbell, CA 95008
(408) 879-9144

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Showing a split of opinion, Dave felt that this was one of the most original games in a long time, while Mike compared it to chess. Chris thought it was "wicked."

continued on page 118

Fly In The Face Of Reality.





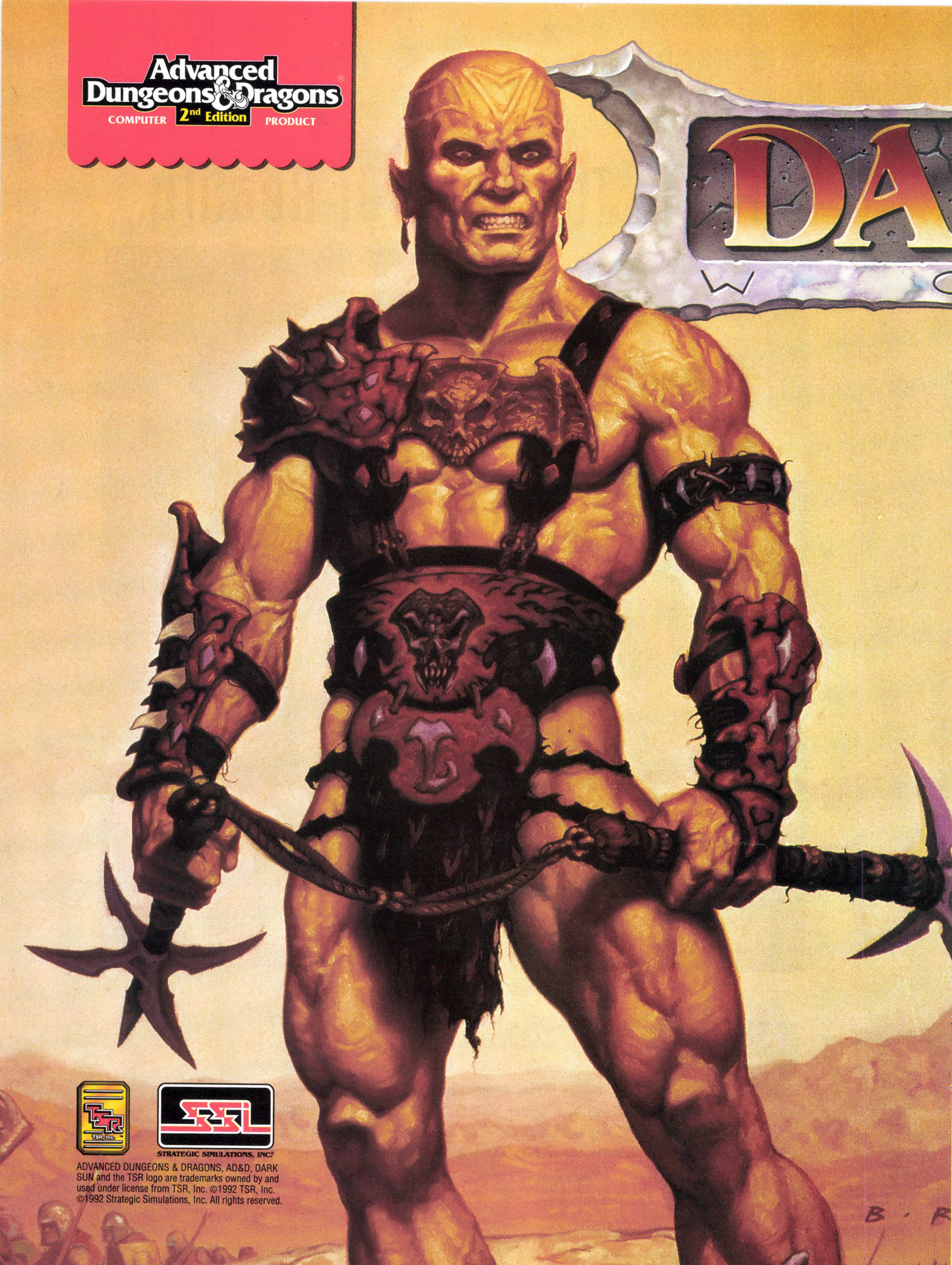
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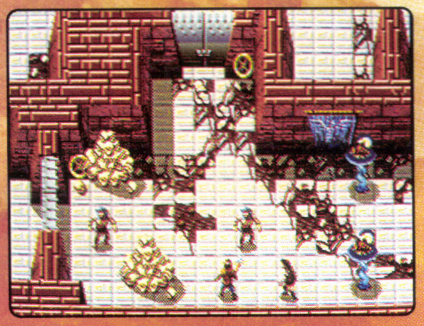
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continued from page 114

The Carl Lewis Challenge

PSYGNOSIS

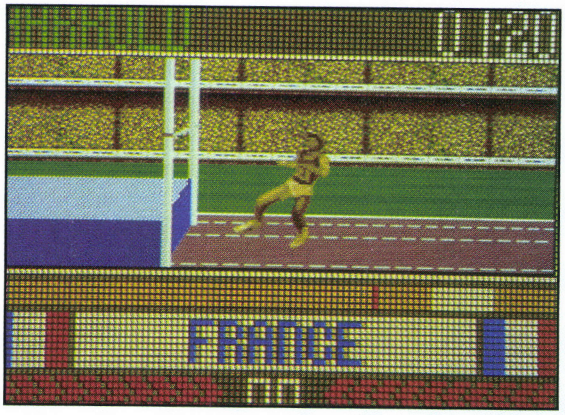
Versions: Amiga ($49.99), Atari ST ($49.99), IBM PC ($49.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10

There doesn't seem to be anything simpler than walking, and, for most people, running, jumping and throwing aren't much harder. Why then does it seem to require great dexterity and speed to move, let alone do well, in most track and field games? Psygnosis' latest game, *The Carl Lewis Challenge*, proves to be no exception to that unwritten rule.

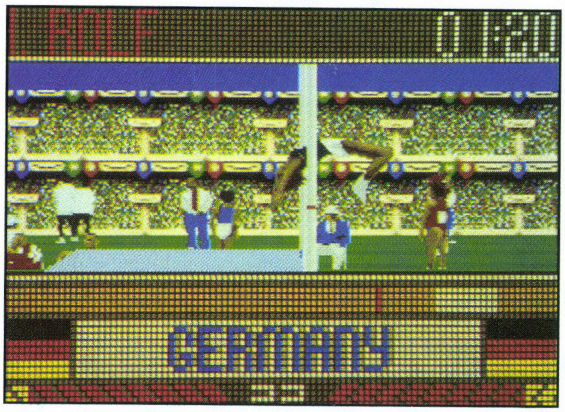
Players participate in five track and field events: 100 meter sprint, 110 meter high hurdles, javelin, high jump and long jump. Players control the athletes on the field and must also train them for competition.

The training phase of the game starts with a team of athletes slightly below average potential. As a coach, the player must determine the training regimen for each athlete for five weeks. There are ten different training methods to use alone or in combination. Too little or too much training will harm an athlete instead of improve him.



Actual play is similar to most side-scrolling track and field games. A player has a choice among three different methods of control: speed, rhythm and gearing. Unfortunately, players must choose one type of control to use for all five events.

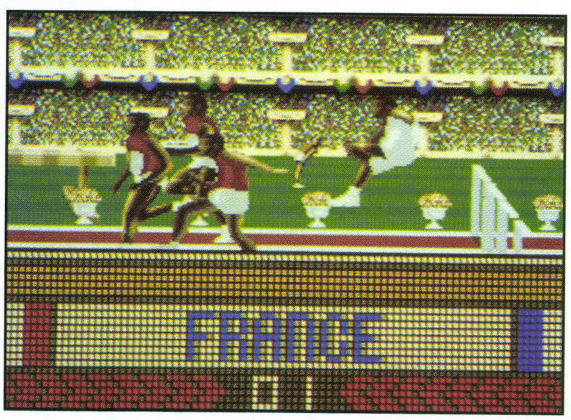
Speed is a basic twitch test: press two keys on the keyboard or move a joystick or mouse back and forth as quickly as possible. The speed control is the most robust for maintaining a high rate of speed, but suffers from delays at the starting block.



Rhythm involves watching a line move back and forth inside a rectangle; when the line is in the middle of the rectangle the player presses a button. This method also is a little slow at the start. As the athlete moves faster, so does the bar, and, on fast computers, it takes superb dexterity to press a button every time the bar is in the middle of the rectangle.



Gearing requires the fewest pushes of a button. As the event monitoring bar progresses, there are certain marked points where, if a player presses a button at the exact time the progress bar reaches the mark, the athlete will maintain his top speed. If the player misses one mark, there is no way to improve his speed until he reaches the next mark.



The actual event fills less than half the screen. The rest of the screen contains information that the player needs to know during a race. It hinders the player to watch the athlete, because not all of the events are easy to perform using the track as a guide.

For example, in the 110 meter high hurdles, a player cannot easily tell when a hurdle is coming up. If a player looks at the athlete for guidance, more than likely the athlete will plow into the next hurdle.

Between each event there are an overabundance of information screens that look like scoreboards in stadiums—points of color on a black background—and are difficult to read. Some of the screens are redundant, and it takes at least twice as long to get through the screens for an event as it does for the event itself.

The Carl Lewis Challenge has brought conditioning to track and field games. Unfortunately, training does not take long, and the game doesn't prove to be very innovative when it is time for the athletes to perform.

—John Schnyder

Psygnosis
29 St. Mary's Court
Brookline, MA 02146
(617) 731-3553

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7	8	9	10

Dave and Mike both thought it was difficult to control, but nice looking. Andy felt like it might be too much work, while Chris said it was worth it.

The Lord of the Rings, Volume Two: The Two Towers

INTERPLAY PRODUCTIONS

Version: IBM PC ($59.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC							■			
GRAPHICS								■		
PLAYABILITY								■		
OVERALL							■			

Author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien created in Middle-earth a rich, compelling world unmatched in the works of many other authors. While some, to a greater or lesser extent, have tried to emulate him, the results have not always fared that well.

Along similar lines, several computer-game developers have tried to capture the feel of Tolkien's Middle-earth. Though some have proved more successful than others, few have achieved a product that faithfully re-created Tolkien's world. One exception is Interplay, which, after a successful release of *The Lord of the Rings, Volume One* in December 1990, has followed up with the second of three volumes just in time for the 100th anniversary of J.R.R. Tolkien's birthday (*The Return of the King, Volume Three*, is also planned).

The Two Towers commences where the original game left off. However, game play differs in that cliffhangers have been added to allow for shifts in action between the various parties. Thus, many events transpire "simultaneously" in the course of the game.

As the story unfolds, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli are in the heat of battle somewhere in Eastern Rohan. After defeating a party of Orcs and meeting up with Gandalf, the action switches to Frodo and Sam who are descending the cliffs near the Dead Marshes. Following the addition of Gollum to their party, they also find themselves in combat against several Orcs. As the battle concludes, the action shifts once more, this time to Pippin and Merry who have escaped their captors and fled into the old forest of Fangorn, home of the Ents. The entire adventure follows this precarious jaunt from one cliffhanger to the next.

While the implementation of these action shifts does aid player involvement, it may also result in some degree of confusion. It's quite easy to lose track of what last happened with each particular party, due to the interspersed events. So, be sure to keep a written record.

Graphics and audio have both seen improvement since *Volume One*. *The Two Towers*, like its predecessor, views Middle-earth from a top-down perspective. However, the 256-color VGA images look much cleaner and more detailed than before, especially character close-ups. Auto-mapping, thankfully, has also been provided. In addition, a well-orchestrated musical score and digitized sounds accompany and enhance play, with all major sound boards supported.

The only noticeable shortcomings present in *The Two Towers* involve the limitation of only six save game positions and the need to read paragraphs from the game manual during play. The latter, which serves as copy protection, is quite distracting and results in an interruption to the flow of the quest.

While *The Two Towers* is meant to be a sequel, it is still fully playable by those who missed *Volume One*. However, to gain the fullest enjoyment, one should play the original *Lord of the Rings* first, or at least be familiar with the book. Otherwise, some of the story's richness is lost. Nevertheless, *The Two Towers* is an engaging, playable adventure based on a classic story. Role-players and Tolkien fans alike should thoroughly enjoy their visit to Middle-earth.

—Chuck Miller

Interplay Productions
3710 S. Susan, Suite 100
Santa Ana, CA 92704
(714) 549-2411









EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE							■			
CB							■			
DM								■		
MD						■				

Dave and Andy both agreed that *The Two Towers* was a must for Tolkien fans. Andy added that the text was hard to read, but Chris liked the story and clear interface.

The Dark Half

CAPSTONE

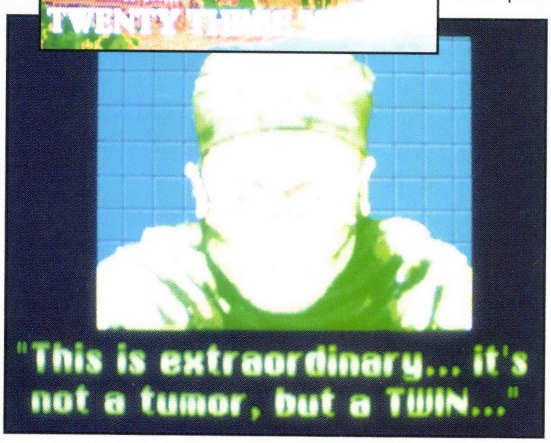
Version: IBM PC ($59.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC								8		
GRAPHICS								8		
PLAYABILITY						6				
OVERALL					5					

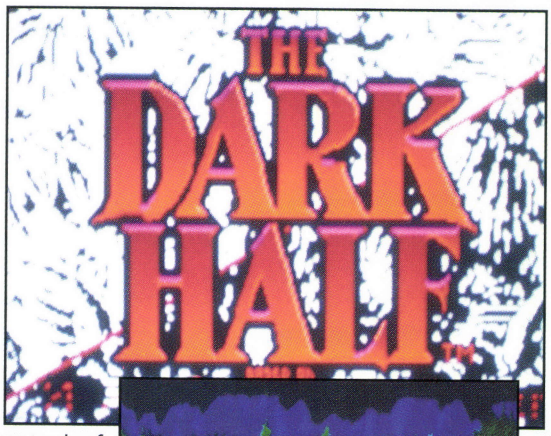
Stephen King, the undisputed demon overlord of the world of horror fiction, almost singlehandedly raised the horror genre from the grave of pulp obscurity to a point where it is surprising to *not* find a horror title among the bestsellers. Whether he should be cursed or lauded for this is a matter of individual taste, but even the most die-hard King fans would admit that his works have not translated well into other mediums. Currently, IntraCorp has transformed Orion Pictures' adaptation of a Stephen King novel into a graphic adventure, *The Dark Half*. Unfortunately, *The Dark Half* suffers from many of the same problems that film versions do: Despite a few good shocks and some interesting images, the story doesn't hold together. In addition to illogical plot developments, the game's brevity tarnishes what would otherwise be a fun, if campy, adventure.



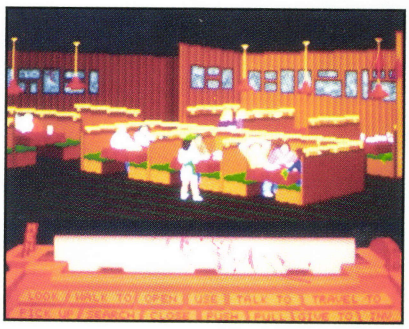




The player assumes the role of Thad Beaumont, an author who has recently been forced to admit that he has written a successful series of horror novels under the pseudonym "George Stark." In a symbolic gesture, Thad "buries" George at the local cemetery, only to come back one night and find the grave empty. A local reporter is murdered, and the game is afoot. Thad must prevent the cops from arresting him as the killer, while trying to stop George from wresting control of his life away from him.







The "evil twin" aspect of the plot adds some amusing kitsch to the story, as do some of the more macabre elements— one unlucky victim is clubbed to death with his own prosthetic leg. The violence is usually more suggested than shown, which makes the violence that *is* shown much more striking.

Graphics in *The Dark Half*, while not extraordinary, are consistently good; the visuals for the endgame are particularly well done, as are the images that fill Thad's dreams. For the most part, the characters' movements are fluid, and the animated sequences often pull the player into the scene—whether into the path of a flock of sparrows or toward the business end of a razor.

The Dark Half falls apart, however, in the utter lack of logic of some of its plot turns. At one point, George calls and tells Thad of a murder he is committing in New York. Rather than staying in his home and informing the police (thereby clearing his name), Thad must find a way to go to New York, which is the only possible way he could remain a suspect. Players should also save before any conversation, as the necessary answers are in the least likely of statements. Coincidences abound, as well as a severe contradiction in some of the possible losing endings.

Finally, the game's simply too short: A good player should finish in about ten to 15 hours of playing time, yet it lists at the same price as games that are two to four times longer.

A solid story is the fundamental aspect of any good graphic adventure, and it is there that *The Dark Half* crumbles. While fans of Stephen King movies should be adequately entertained, *The Dark Half* fails to make the cut.

—David N. Eadington

IntraCorp.
14202 SW 136th St.
Miami, FL 33186
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EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE						6				
CB							7			
DM						6				
MD							7			

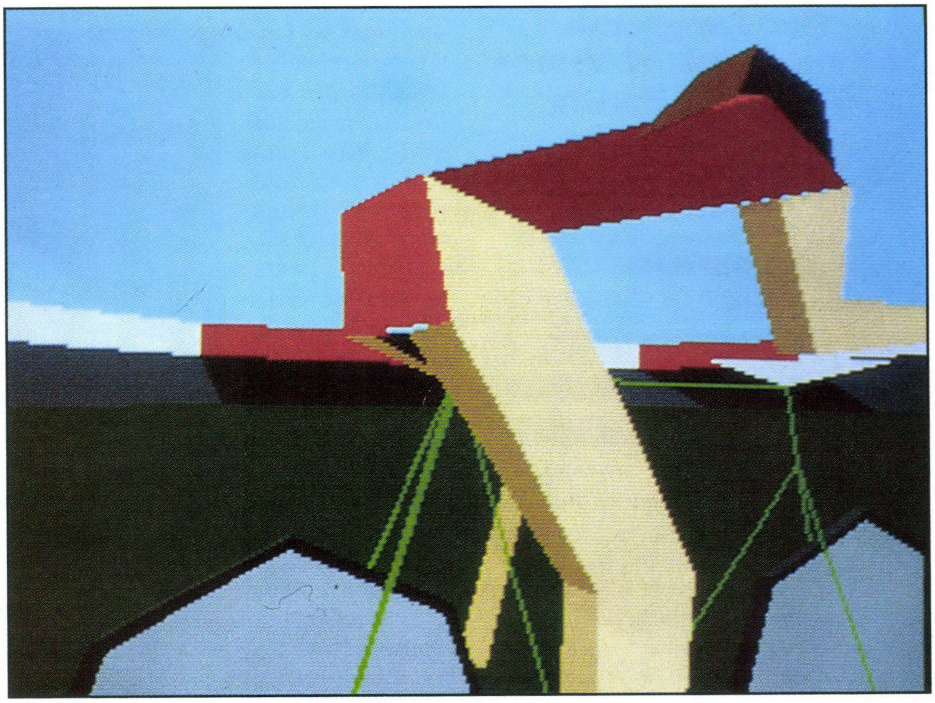
As you would expect from Stephen King, the story is creepy, which Chris indicated. Mike spoke for all when he said the game could have used some refinement.

International Sports Challenge

EMPIRE SIMULATIONS

Versions: Amiga ($49.95), IBM PC ($49.95)

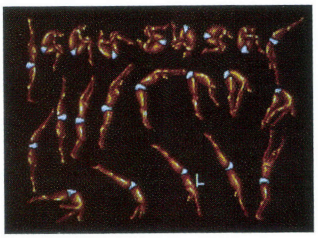
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	**3**	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10



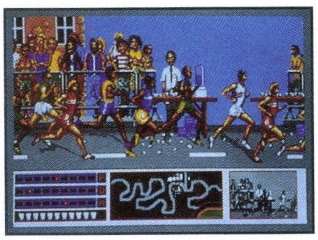
This Olympic year has drama, heroics, the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat. Empire Simulations' recent *International Sports Challenge* for the IBM PC is a sad example of the latter.

This game attempts to simulate six different Olympic-class events: the marathon, diving, show-jumping (equestrian), swimming, cycling and shooting. Only shooting is halfway interesting, but, as it's also the last event played in sequence, it's very likely that the typical player won't get that far.

The marathon is an odd choice for a computer simulation. Run over a course of 28 kilometers, it's almost as grueling as the real thing. At the start of the race you adjust a few parameters by rhythmically wiggling the joystick (or rubbing the mouse back and forth). Eventually, the runner tires or grows hungry or thirsty, but there are handy refreshment stations along the route.







The graphics are not nearly up to standard for VGA games. For instance, the runner stays fairly stationary on the screen while a crowd scrolls past in the background. What's wrong with this? It's the same group of people, about a screen-and-a-half's worth, going by over and over.

Since the marathon takes so long to run, the game switches to other events, returning after each to show your progress. Of course, if the runner is not fed or watered regularly, he quickly drops out, making the return to the marathon less than thrilling.

The diving and swimming rounds both suffer from extremely awkward user interfaces. In diving, a circle with a ball around the outside guides the player's joystick movements. If the ball is followed closely, the dive will score well with the judges. However, while moving the ball, it is almost impossible to actually watch the diver go through the necessary motions.

In swimming, the player has to move the joystick back and forth while watching for a heart to appear on the screen, the signal to breath (the fire button).

Now we turn to equestrian. Aside from being nearly impossible to control—the easiest way to slow down is to head into a wall—the show-jumping suffers from a ridiculous horse graphic that looks more like a toy wooden horse on a stick than a world-class steed. The background graphics are actually fairly well done, and, if the horse could follow directions, this round would have some hope.

As in the show-jumping round, the cycling event makes good use of polygon-filled graphics for the course, a banked oval. The foreground is pretty lame: a static image of a pair of arms and some stiff handlebars. As in swimming, the user interface is simply a matter of wiggling the joystick.

The shooting round is at least halfway reasonable. Why not save the best for last? Aim with the mouse and shoot with the button. Not terribly original, but, at this point, a welcome relief.

While this game does support the Ad Lib and Sound Blaster boards, the best music by far is between rounds, not during the actual events! During the events there are minimal sound effects, including the worst crowd cheers since the old VIC 20's sound effects.

There is actually something good in the game box: The manual is chock full of interesting information about the Olympics and the sports themselves.

Overall, this title is one major disappointment. Other computer games, notably Epyx Software's classic *Summer Games*, did this much better.

—Edwin Byrd

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7	8	9	10

Quite diverse scores, eh? Chris liked its variety and play mechanics, while Andy called it "crude by today's standards." Mike didn't think it was very inventive.

The Awesome Adventures of Victor Vector & Yondo Adventure 1: The Vampire's Coffin

SANCTUARY WOODS

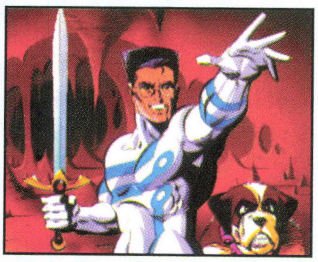
Version: Macintosh CD-ROM ($59.95)

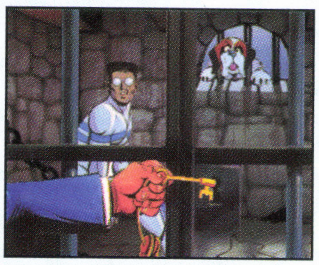
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC							■			
GRAPHICS						■				
PLAYABILITY				■						
OVERALL					■					

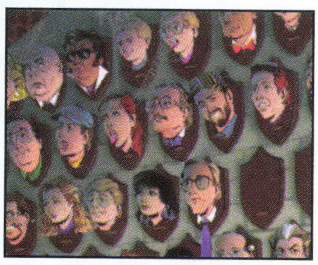
There is a small but growing subgenre of CD-ROM games for the Macintosh world. Add to the list *Victor Vector & Yondo*, a smorgasbord of multimedia treats which, alas, are neither filling nor particularly tasty.

Victor Vector is an interactive adventure told in comic-book style. You are an archivist working for a futuristic museum. You control Victor Vector and his faithful companion Yondo (a digitally enhanced talking dog) as your agents to be sent back in time to fetch various interesting artifacts. In this adventure, your task is to retrieve Dracula's coffin from the late 19th century.

The game is played through a small window that frames static pictures for each scene. You click inside the scene to do everything. Click on an object and you might pick it up; click on a person and he or she will speak with you; click on an exit and Victor and Yondo will go there, if possible. Objects you gather are collected in a backpack for later use, though I never was able to figure out where the backpack was hidden on Victor's skintight suit.







The game's scenes and characters have been drawn in a very stylized comic-book fashion. The graphics are clean, but their childish simplicity won't excite many players. Nor do they enhance any attempts to set a creepy atmosphere, which is probably fine by the creators, since the game has a decidedly tongue-in-cheek flavor throughout.

Victor Vector features considerable digitized audio. Each character speaks through the Mac speaker with varying degrees of acting ability. For example, Victor has been cast as a nerdy hero with a distinctly Canadian accent. Some of the voices have been electronically altered, though this makes a few of them difficult to understand. Music is plentiful and probably the best part of the game, lending atmosphere when the graphics fail to do so.

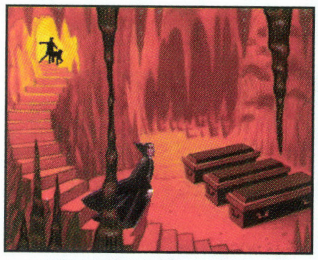
In addition, about a dozen Quicktime movies have been added. These are largely for added spice during your research; they play no actual part in solving the adventure. Worse, they are digitized versions of old black-and-white vampire films and are quite grainy and, in some cases, nearly illegible. The thought was good, gut the execution was only fair.

Finally, there is the adventure itself. There aren't really any substantial puzzles. You must simply find the right objects or be unable to advance. Your character has an energy rating that will cause you to lose, should it become zero. Energy can be replenished by clicking on various insects and spiders (don't ask why this works). In the endgame, you will need to have a reasonably high energy to weather the final battle, a sword-clicking contest with the game's primary villain.









I finished *Victor Vector* in under three hours on the easy level. When I replayed at the higher difficulty level, I found that the game simply had more obstacles (ways of losing energy), but not more puzzles. So replay value is very slim. It's possible that the creators never intended *Victor Vector* to be a real adventure, but simply and interactive comic book. Unfortunately, it is an awfully short book, and the visual and auditory rewards are few.

For those with a taste for campy silliness or with young children, *Victor Vector* may provide some fun. For myself, it was mildly diverting for a couple of hours, but the lack of a real challenge and the simplicity of the presentation left me cold in the end.

—Stephen Mitchell

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Victoria, BC
CANADA V8V 3K8
(604) 380-7582

EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE						■				
CB								■		
DM						■				
MD						■				

Dave says he's "a sucker for Ken Steacy art." Andy thought it "looked great, but was less filling," and Mike said it "lacked meat." These guys must've been hungry.

Hoi

HOLLYWARE ENTERTAINMENT
Version: Amiga ($39.95)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SOUND/MUSIC									9	10
GRAPHICS								8	9	10
PLAYABILITY								8	9	10
OVERALL								8	9	10

I have a love/hate relationship with arcade games. I love the artwork and the music and the satisfaction of getting to the end of a level. I love conquering the devious intricacies of getting from point A to point B and figuring out how to get past what seems to be an insurmountable obstacle. I love the creatures and the imagination arcade games show.

What I hate is starting Level 2 for the 37th time with only one life left and knowing I'm going to get killed off in the next five seconds. I hate the cramp I get in my hand after I've had a deathgrip on the joystick for the past six hours. I hate looking up and finding that it's four in the morning. And, most of all, I hate that I'll keep coming back for more.

Hoi is one of my worst obsessions. It's a little on the cute side for my taste, but that doesn't stop it from being one of the better Super NES-style games in recent memory. I first saw *Hoi* in a beta version I could only get to run for about five minutes at a time and got hooked on it then. I got pretty good at the first part of Level 1.

The premise of the game is a little different than most: Instead of saving the universe, you have to guide Hoi, your little saur, to the other side of the continent so he can meet a single, female saur. I can't remember ever seeing an arcade game where love and propagation of the species were the guiding forces. And that's one of the things I like best about *Hoi*; while its world is a dangerous one, it isn't gratuitously violent.

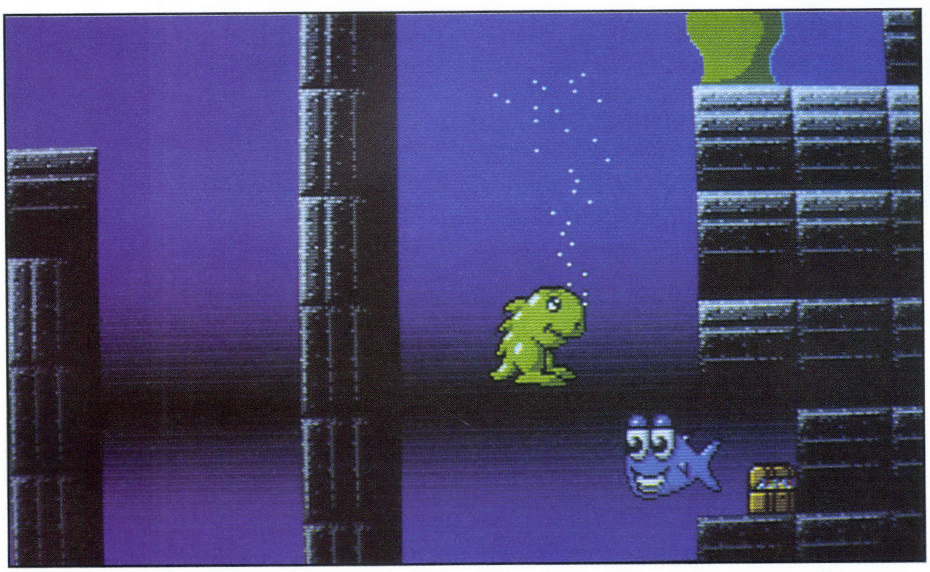
The game is your basic jump, shoot and dodge while collecting stuff scattered around the landscape. It isn't anything new, but it's solid entertainment with good production values. It falls somewhere below Psygnosis games, but above most console games in a similar vein. The graphics are cartoony, well-drawn and adequately animated. I know it's mostly a matter of style and taste, but I did think the backgrounds could have used a little more detail. The sound and music are very high quality.

The play in *Hoi* is moderate: not impossible, but certainly not easy, either. You start with nine lives (saurs must be related somehow to cats) and you'll need them. My main complaint about the play is that it is so very easy to be killed off. Nearly every object is deadly, and falling even short distances is fatal. It's also too easy in spots to get stuck, requiring the sacrifice of a life. Small kids and grown-ups will likely find it frustrating; seasoned arcaders won't mind.

If you love/hate arcade games as much as I do, you'll certainly want to add *Hoi* to your collection. It's a fine bit of entertainment fluff that will keep you glued to your joystick until you conquer it.

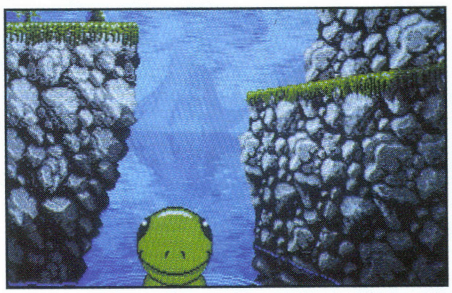
—Tom Malcolm

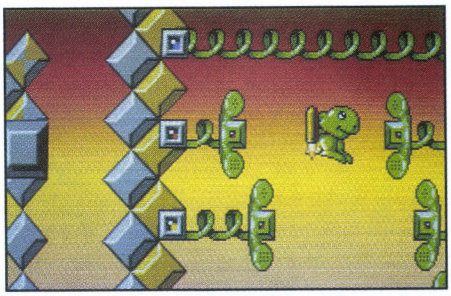
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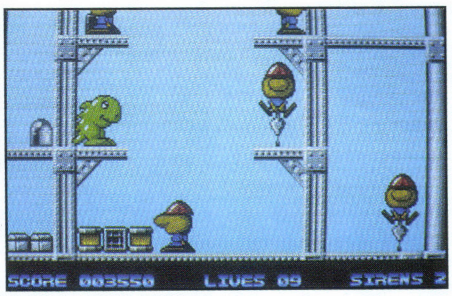












EDITORS' CORNER

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
AE								8		
CB							7			
DM							7			
MD								8		

Mike and Andy both commented that it's not very often that you get a cartridge-type game on a disk, but that's what *Hoi* is. Dave liked its cuteness.

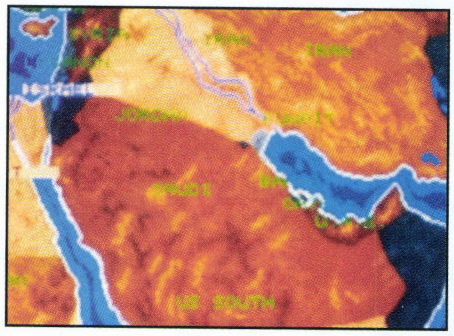
Air Force Commander

IMPRESSIONS

Versions: Amiga ($59.95), IBM PC ($59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

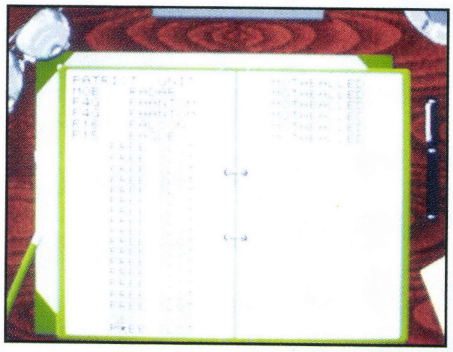




Impressions' *Air Force Commander* (*AFC*) uses real-time play to keep the behind-the-scenes action fast moving and exciting. Players command one or a small group of Middle Eastern countries, depending on the scenario. Simple point-and-click commands (with keyboard equivalents) control both planes and ground-based installations (radar, patriot missile, fuel dumps, etc.). Squadrons can be placed on automatic and will repeat their mission until the target is destroyed or they run out of fuel.

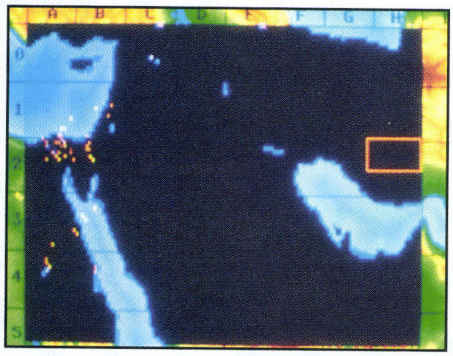
Assigning targets and following planes' progress is made easy using three maps: satellite, radar and strategic. Satellite is for those interested in watching the actual explosions and individual drawings of the airborne craft. Radar shows all flying objects within a larger range, which side they are on and their altitude via striped multicolored lines. The strategic map displays all Middle Eastern countries, involved or not, as well as airborne craft and player radar range.

The key to success in *AFC* is radar. Often an enemy is so far away that Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) carrying planes must be kept aloft or bombing missions invariably fail. The best combat planes need to leave ground targets undefended to provide cover for AWACS. Similarly, the radar planes make exceptional targets, and even the smallest nation can cripple its opponent with a few well-executed bombing raids on ground radar. This, however, applies only to battles in large, disparate countries. Israel and Lebanon receive each other's radio and television, so any radar strikes are a waste of time.



More than providing extra scenarios, the Gulf War was crucial in *AFC*'s creation. Many weapon systems had been previously untested, and this newly gathered data makes the game's "what if" scenarios that much more intriguing.

The research that went into *AFC* is responsible for an inevitable problem: Because the forces are portrayed as accurately as possible, very few of the scenarios are close matches. *AFC* actually has 14 missions, but players may play either side, though the difficulty and complexity scores of both possibilities rarely seem to have anything to do with each other. An unbalanced scenario doesn't necessarily mean a bad game. If anything, it encourages players to try out different strategies.



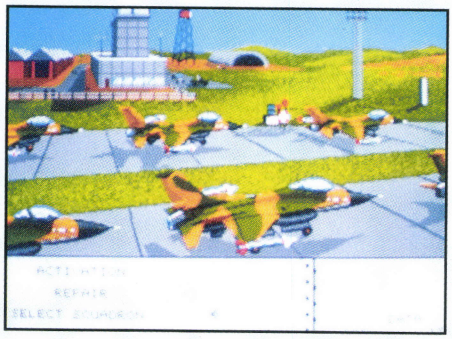
This is especially true when fighting a heavily armed country like Israel, which is especially sensitive to public uproar. Air force bases might be well guarded, but food and water supplies are often wide open targets. Israel's military might is also hampered by limited fuel supply and distribution to the bases.

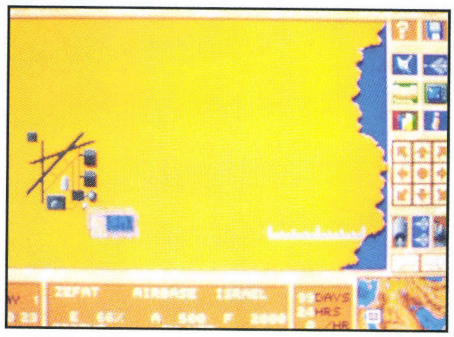
Impressions is planning a module featuring World War II fights. The scenarios may be more evenly matched and the outcomes more unpredictable given the technology, but few war games will ever be able to simulate the political background this first module does. Hopefully, these additions will include both 3.5" and 5.25" floppies.

AFC could benefit from a few user-friendly commands, such as a quit game, multiple saved games and a more varied game-speed control, but none of these overshadow *Air Force Commander*'s three critical strengths: originality, research and real-time action in a strategic war simulation.

—David S. Moskowitz

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(203) 676-9002





EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Chris came to the conclusion that it was a little dry, and Mike felt there could have been some more bells and whistles. Andy, however, liked the historical accuracy.

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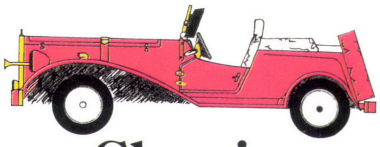
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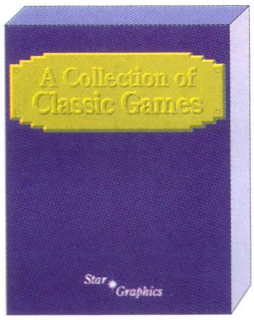
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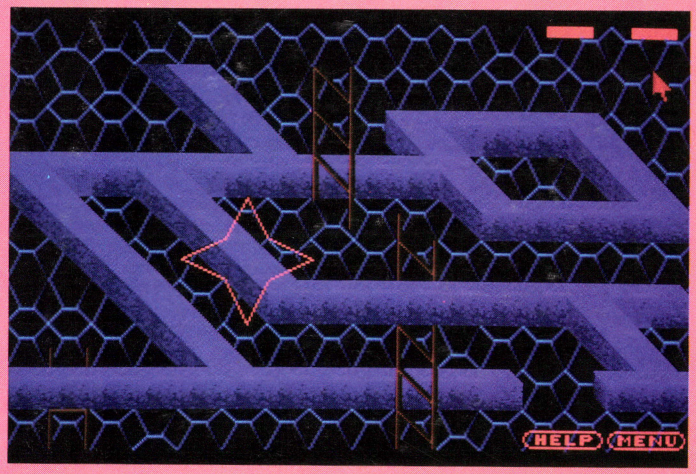
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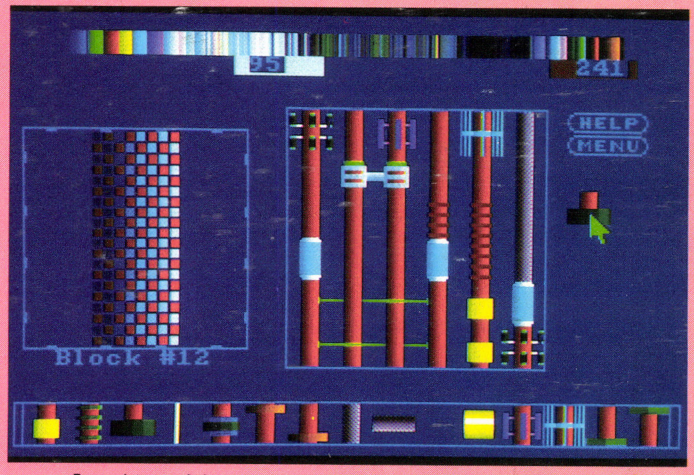
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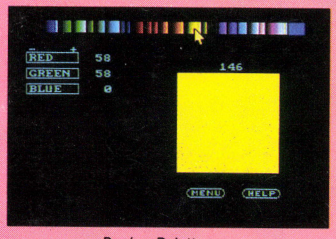
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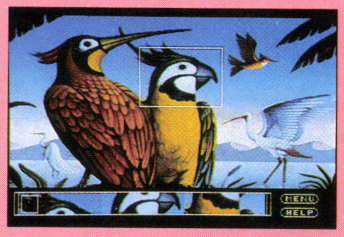
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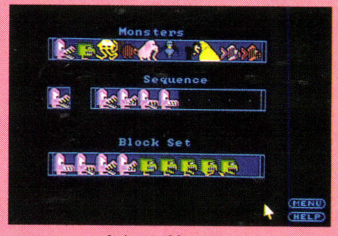
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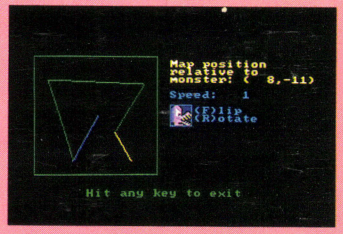
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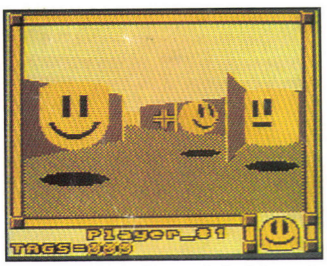
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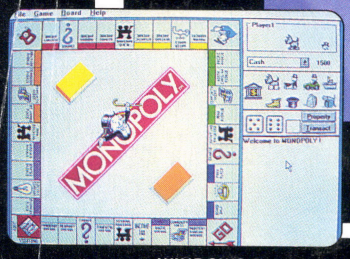
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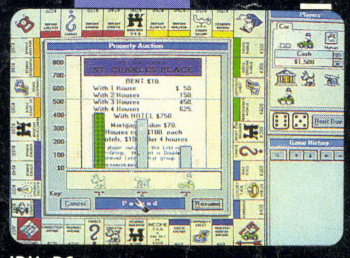
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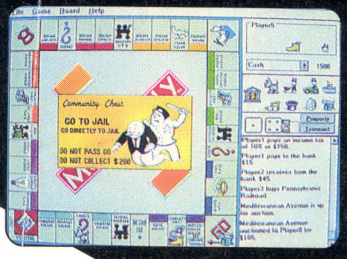
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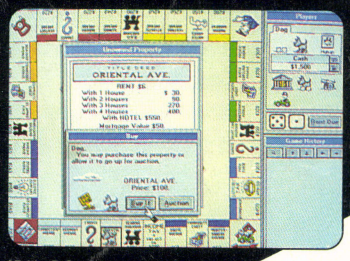
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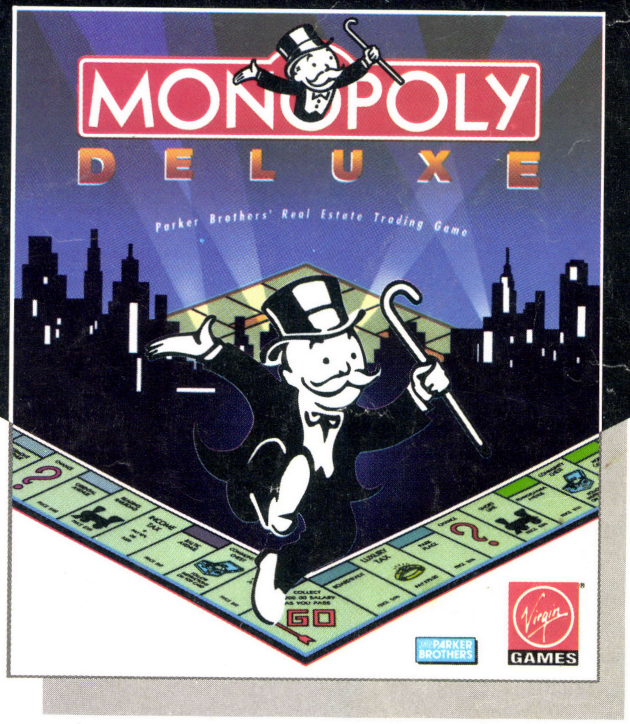
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